11

COLLECTED PAPERS

PROFESSOR
Dr. N. SUBBU REDDIAR

Collected Papers

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Prof. Dr. N. SUBBU REDDIAR

DEDICATION

Respectfully dedicated to that small world of scholarship which while content to remain 'unseen and unknown' out of becoming humility yet is the fountain-head of the highest inspiration of creativity and architect of change and progress - the world of thc directors and guides of true research.

அன்புப் படையல்

பற்பல வடிவொ டெண்ணமாம் அலைகள்
பாங்குற அலைந்திடும் உளத்தில்
கற்பனை உதவ ஆய்வெனும் கலத்தைக்
களிப்புடன் நடத்திடு வோர்க்குப்
பொற்புறும் ஒளியை நாடொறும் வழங்கும்
புரையறு கலங்கரை விளக்காய்
நிற்பதே பணியாய்க் கொளும்நெறி யாளர்
நேர்மைக்கிந் நூலுரித் தாமால்.

Foreword

(Professor K.R. Srinivasa Aiyengar)

My esteemed friend, Prof. N. Subbu Reddiar, is less than reasonable in asking me to write a Foreword to this *Collected Papers*, covering the entire field of Tamil Studies, and even overflowing the boundaries so as to mingle in the vast spaces of India reaching upto the Himalayas. I have no credentials to write a Foreword to such a collection as this, 27 learned papers or addresses before academic fraternities, here arranged under 'Religion and Philosphy', 'Language and Literature' and 'History, Education and Culture'. The garner of a life-time devoted to scholarship and teaching, and to the dissemination of Tamil letters and the Vaishnavism of the Tamil Azhavars (and the later apostles), the collection carries its own stamp of authority, and hardly needs any special commendation from one like me whose knowledge in these areas is no more than peripheral. But the claims of friendship are paramount and besides, having learnt a great deal by reading this Collection of papers, it is a pleasure to record my appreciation and gratitude.

Prof. Subbu Reddiar's academic career seems to have spanned the extremities, from the village pial school to the spacious Halls of Sri Venkateswara University. Like me he too had opted for Mathematics-Physics-Chemistry (MPC) at the Intermediate, and Mathematics and Science at the degree course. Then came the decisive shift to Tamil Language and Literature, culminating in his massive Ph.D. dissertation, which has since been published as *Religion and Philosophy of Nalayira Divya Prabandham with Special Reference to Nammalvar* a monumental study of over 900 pages. Dr. Subbu Reddiar's earlier training in science, however, hasn't been in vain, for he has been able to press this specialist knowledge into service in his Tamil writings or translations relating to subjects like physiology, Nuclear Physics and Rockets.

As a teacher too, he has accumulated a body of variegated experience ranging from the Headmastership of the Turaiyur High school to the Headship of the Department of Tamil Studies in Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati. Scholar, teacher, organiser of teaching, savant in Tamil language and literature, disseminator of knowledge about Vaishnava religion and philosophy, and well-informed and animated guide to the hundred hallowed Vaishnava shrines in South India, Prof. Subbu Reddiar is a man of many parts, and these facets of his learning and personality stand revealed in the present collection of 27 papers, which is really a selection from a corpus comprising more than double the number.

The packaging of a collection of papers and addresses that were prepared or delivered over a period of years and on a diversity of subjects raises ticklish problems. A strictly chronological arrangement may have its own justification, but it will have to wink at strange bedfellows. Hence the contrived arrangement here under three interlinked sub-headings. But in this sort of collection, it would be wrong to look for a steady progression of an argument or for the dialectical presentation of a problem. Variety, versatility and facundity have their uses as well as inconveniences. Even so a garner of essays has its own attractions and its own shortcomings. On the other hand, such a collection as this is not meant to be read at a stretch, but dipped into as the occasion arises; and once you start with one piece, you may be lured on to another and another, and every time this happens, you will light upon new discoveries.

The Tamil Azhvars (the eleven elected ones from Poigai to Tirumangai, and Andal the woman mystic-singer unparalleled) are Prof. Reddiar's perennial subject of discourse, and Nammazhvar - understandably enough—is the heart and soul of it all. The '*Four Thousand*' fascinate Reddiar from every angle, and he communicates his fervours, insights, the finding or his research, his reasoned assessments and his comparatist, evaluations, to the interested reder also. No doubt there is

some repetition, unavoidable repetition, since there are patches of common ground between the diverse papers, but happily there are no contradictions. The *tenkelai-vadakalai* debate among the South Indian Vaishnavites figures in both chapters 2 and 10; *tattva, hita* and *purushartha* are discussed in chapter 8 as also 10; and Tiruvalluvar figures in all three sections. But the broad clarity of the divisions remains, and the cumulative thrust of the 27 papers is almost cyclopaedic in the context of Tamil history, literature and culture.

In Ramanuja Vedanta, the God-soul relationship is symbolised in the *sesha-seshi, sarira—sariri bhava:*

> "God is called the Inner self or Soul (*sareeri*), because as long as they exist, He is... their support, their controller or Rular and their master (*seshi*) ... God is said to be the *Seshi* of all things, because they exist solely for the fulfilment of His purposes. The relationship may be paraphrased as the owner-owned relationship.". (p. 49).
> "What characterises the soul is its relation of liegeship (as creature) to God, the Lord (as creator) = *seshatvam*" (p. 52).

Likewise, in his *King of the Castle*, Gai Eaton (an English Muslim) explains how the human body is the Castle of the King (i.e. God), and the human soul is only the Viceroy. Man the Viceroy, is for the King's (God's) service, and use, and that is how he becomes a link between Here and Eternity. Once this is grasped, Man will find no satisfaction in serving other Masters, or advancing only his own interests. In society too, and in the nation, the only Ruler, the only Master, is God, and all else—Emperor, Mikado, Raja, Sultan, President, Prime Minister—are but the Viceroys answerable to God the source and home of all.

The 10 or more papers on the Azhvars and their work cover whole range of themes, from the codification of the '*Four thousand*' to the value of weeping in spiritual life, from the '*Four Thousand*' as *Dravida Veda* to Bridal

Mysticism in the Azhvars, and from 'Nature Poetry in Azhvars' to the '*Four Thousand*' in relation to the Saiva *Tirumurais*. Here is one excerpt from the last:

> "Sometimes stress is being made on the diffcrent aspects of one and the same episode. For instance, the Azhvars emphasise the churning of the ocean and supplying the nectar to the Devas by Vishnu and the Saivite saints on the swallowing of all destroying poison produced as a by-product in the churning process and saving the world from destruction by Siva. If the Azhvars revel with the three strides of Vishnu and His Visvaroopa, the Nayanmars lose themselves in Siva's form of the big blaze of fire..." (pp. 223–4)

Next in importance to the Azhvars is Tiruvalluvar, who claims a paper in each of the three sections in the volume. Prof. Subbu Reddiar classes Tiruvalluvar with Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhva; and, besides, Tiruvalluvar "represents the true Tamil spirit and is verily the Manu of the Tamil Country" (p. 132). And Tiruvalluvar's life—mission was, simply and all-sufficingly, "to make a *sandron* of every individual". No aim could have been nobler; and none is more needed today.

The other great maker of Tamil literature, Kamban, figures in the essay on the 'Minor Characters' in his *Ramavataram*. There are perceptive comments on Jatayu, Mantharai, Guha, Angada and especially on Neelamalai who doesn't figure in Valmiki. Thus, for instance, on Guha:

> "Guha ferrying Rama across the Ganges makes one amused when one reflects that He who ferries all his creations across life's journey is himself ferried across the waters of the Ganges". (p. 247).

"There is no superfluous character", concludes Prof. Reddiar, "and none without a purpose related to the larger epic purpose". (p. 249)

There are, then, the scholarly and informative essays on *Muttollayiram* and *Kalingattupparani*, on Science Education and Medical References in Ancient Tamil Literature, and a piece on Highlights of Tamil Cultural Influence Abroad, Also of seminal importance is the essay on "One India" in Tamil literature, in which prof. Subbu Reddiar demonstrates with telling citations that "the Kumari—Himalaya combination signifying the integrity of *Bharatavarsha* is as old as the very commencement of Tamil literature, and any suggestion of a separate Tamil country or Andhra country is as unhistorical as it is dangerously frivolous" (p. 281).

In conclusion, there is not a piece but has its pointed relevance and value in the context of Prof. Reddiar's total aim to project the many-sided richness and integral health of Tamil life, letters and culture within the wider background of Indian Civilisation and culture; and I have not the slightest doubt that this volume, with its every rift loaded with ore, will be received with acclaim and gratitude by a widening circle of readers comprising scholars and 'common readers' alike.

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COLLECTED PAPERS

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FOREWORD

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Preface

I have pleasure in presenting this small collection of papers on our Religion, Philosophy, Culture anp History not only as a sort of a change from my usual Tamil writings but also as containing the essence of such writings in a language that ean reach a wider readership. I did not sit down to prepare a work in English with this twin objective, but collected the papers I had presented at various national conferences and seminars and the special articles contributed to souvenirs on special invitation. Thc source of each paper is indicated in the footnote at the commencement page of each paper.

Before collecting the papers I had a misgiving that the whole presentation would be in the nature of unrelated random round about papers artificially put together to provide sufficient quantity for a book. After the collection in the process of seeking any possible relationship amoag the different papers, I was happy to discover a distinctive pattern in the relationship. The whole presentation appeared to be very nearly cogent, complementary and connected with one another. I divldcd the collection into three parts viz., (a) Religion and Philosophy (b) Language and Literaturc, (c) History, Education and Culture. I hope my readers, will not begrudge appreciating the totality in the pattern of these papers inspite of the apparent dlfferences among the themes. The factor of totality is no doubt coincidental, but I would permit myself to believe that in view of my equipment confined to these three areas, I should have chosen themes which I could confidently do justice to. Incidentally these papers may serve as a kind of an introduction to my more comprehensive works in Tamil and a compression of my tome on Nammazhvar and readers not familiar with the Tamil Language may find in the collection something to stimulate their interest in Tamil studies,

I am extremely thankful to Professor K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar, former V:ce-Chancellor of Andhra University who, inspite of varied engagements, mostly in the sphere of culture, could still find the time to go through my collection and to favour with a Foreword which I accept both as an inspitation and blessing.

I thank the Tirumalai-Tirupathi Devasthanams for the grant-in-aid towards the publication of this work.

I have dedicated this work in very general terms to the world of scholarship in view of my long association with guidance of research. The responsibility of research guidance especially at the Doctoral and post-Doctoral levels is becoming more and more stupendous partly in view of the deteriorating student-calibre and partly due to the exacting demands of the new research technology of research. Thesis-engineering requires guidance experts of the highest calibre with the days of arm-chair research fast disappearing. There fore as a member of this emerging category of research-guides I feel it my duty to express my appreciation of the sense of commitment which my fellow research-guides bring to bear upon their work and I have the greatest pleasure in dedicating this work to them.

'Venkatam'
AD-13, Anna Nagar
Madras - 600 040
April 24, 1985

N. SUBBU REDDIAR

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A.H.	Aacarya Hrdayam
A K N	Akanaanooru
A.P.	Amalanaatipiraan
Bhaag.P.	Bhaagavada Puraana
Bhag. Vis.	Bhagavad—Vishayam
Bh.G.	Bhagavad—Geeta
Br.Up.	Brhadharavanya Upanishad
C.TML.	Ciriya Tirumatal
Ch.Up.	Chandoga Upanishad
C L P.	Cilapatikaavam
D.P.	Deshkap—Prabandham
G.P.	Guruparamparaa
Gar.P.	Garudapuraana
H.V.	Harivamsa
Ir.Tv.	Irantaam Tiruvantaati
Kath.Up.	Katha Upanishad
KC.	Kanninun Clruttaampu
KLT.	Kalittokai
K.R.	Kamparaamaayanam
KRN.	Kuruntokai
Koor.P.	Koormapuraanam
L.T.	Lakshimitantram
Mu.Tv.	Mutal Piruvantaati
M.Bh.	Mahaabhaaratam
MLP.	Mullaip-paattu
MTK.	Maturaik-Kaanei
Moo.Tv.	Moonraam Tiruvantaai
Mun.Up	Muntaka Upanishad
Naa.Tm.	Naacciyar Tirumozhi
Nan.Tv.	Nanmukan Tiruvantaati
N R R.	Narrinai
P.TML	Periya Tirumatal
P.Tv.	Periya Tiruvantaati
PRP.	Paripaatal
Periyal-Tm.	Periyaazhvar Tirumozhi
Perum. Tm.	Perumaal Tirumozhi

PP.	Periyā Puraanam
PRMP	Perum Paanaarrup-patai
Ram	Ramaayanam
RN	Ramaanuca Noorrantaati
RTS.	Rahasya Traya Saara
RV	Rg. Veda
SV	Saama Veda
SVP	Srivaraaha Puranam
Sv. Up.	Svatasvatava Upanishad
Tait.Up.	Taittreeya Upanishad
Tc.V.	Tiruccanta Viruttam
TK	Tirukkuruntaantakam
TM	Tirumaalai
T L K	Tolkaappiyam
T M R P	Tirumurukaarrup-patai
T M R	Tirumurai
TN	Tiruneluntaantakam
TPL.	Tiruppallaantu
TE.	Tiruppalli Ezhucci
TPV	Tiruppaavai
TVK.	Tiruvaacakam
TVC.	Tiruvaaciriyam
TVM.	Tiruvaaymozhi
TVLK	Tiruvezhukkorrirukkai
T V R	Tiruviruttam
Var. P.	Varaahapuraanam
Vay.P.	Vaayupuraanam
V.S.	Vedaanta Sutram
V.Dh.	Visnnu Dharmam
V.T.	Vishnu Tantram

SECTION : I

Religion and Philosophy

1. VISHNU CULT IN ANCIENT TAMIL LITERATURE*

INTRODUCTION: This paper is limited to Cankan Literature[1] which, according to tradition, is classified as the *Pattu-p-paattu* (the Ten Idylls) and the *Ettu-t-tokai* (the Eight Anthologies), *Tirukkural* and *Cilappatikaaram* an epic belonging to a slightly later period[2] also are taken into account in this discussion. The worship of Vishnu receives a significant treatment in these works though they were not mainly intended to deal with religious matters. These works contain references not only to the concept of the deity concerned but also to the cult of temple worship and the philosophical and religious settings which formed the background of such worship.[3]

REFERENCES TO THE DEITY: (1) The Cankam classics refer to the worship of Tirumaal (Vishnu)[4], Krishna[5], and

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★ Paper presented to the 25th session of the All-India Oriental Conference held inJadavpur University, Calcutta in October, 1969.

1. The majority of classics so far available are assigned to the Pre-Christian periods by Tamil Scholars.
2. Second Century. A few scholars like Prof. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai brings this epic to the age of Pallava supremacy.
3. Subramanya Sastri, P. S. *Cankanoolkalum Vaitikamaarkkamum* (1951) pp. 46 to 59.
4. *Tirumurukaarrup-patai* (TMRP) *ll*. 12, 151, 164-65; *Perumpaanaarrup-patai* (PRMP), *ll*.29 to 31, 402 to 404; *Mullai-p-paattu* (MLP), *ll*. 3 & 4; *Maturai-k-kaanclu* (MTK) *ll*. 591 & 592.
   Kali-t-tokai (KLT), 105, 119, 124 & 127; *Paripaatal* (PRP), 2, 3, 4, 13 & 15.
5. *Puranaanooru* (PRN), 56, 58, 174, 201 & 378; *Akanaanooru* (AKN), 59 & 175; KLT 134.

Baladeva.[6] The versein *Puranaanuru* collection[7] includes Krishna and Baladeva, along with Siva and Subrahmanya, as the four controlling deities of the Universe. This irrefutable evidence that among the gods commanding worship as supreme deities along with the Saivite pair, is indeed of great signicance. The theme *'Poovainilai'*, as it is called in *Purattinai-Iyal*, aims at the identification of a ruling monarch with one of the principal deities of the Hindu Pantheon, namely Brahmaa, Vishnu and Siva.[8] Loyalty to the patron had ever been an admirable trait of the Tamils from time immemorial and there are instances where the king is likened to God. Verily the king is a protector of the prople in the same way as Tirumaal or Maayon is the protector of the Universe. The *Puranaanooru* verse under reference is a fine illustration of the point. Krishn and Baladeva are referred to in another place where a Chola and Paantiya are together praised as looking like these gods.[9] One verse in *Akanaanooru* refers to the story of Raama[10] and another verse of the same work *kuravai-k-koothu* (*raasa*-dance) of Krishna[11]. The verse in *Kali-t-tokai* mentions the victory of Krishna over the wrestlers and his slaying of them.[12]

2. Apart from these stray references *Paripaatal* containes six poems in description of Vishnu. These are intended to describe the character of Vishnu as a deity and have no more definite object of describing the *Bhaagavata* or any other cult as such. Even so the description of Vishnu as given in the two poems[14] by one Katuvan Ilaeyinanaar follows closely rather the description of Vishnu as supreme in the Paancharaatra texts and *Naaraayaneeya* of the *Mahabhaarata* as well. Another poem in the same work by one Ilamperuvalutiyar[15] makes a special mention of Krishna and Baladeva as the deities

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6. ibid. 56; KLT. 26, 36, 104 & 105.
7. ibid. 56
8. *Tolkaappiyam* (TLK) 3.2;5, *ll.* 9 & 10.
9. PRN. 58.
10. AKN. 70.
11. ibid. 232.
12. KLT 134.
13. PRP. 1, 2, 3, 4, 13 and 15.
14. ibid. 2, 3.
15. ibid. 15

installed in Tirumaalirunchloai. This fact could be confirmed beyond doubt by references in the ancient Tamil Grammar *Tolkaappiyam* where it is stated that the presiding deity at Mullai (pastoral) tract is Maayon (Tirumaal) and it is significant that He is mentioned first in the *sutra*.[16] It has already been pointed out that the king was compared with Tirumaal. The ethical literary work *Tirukkural* contains two references to this deity".[17]

(3) In *Cilapatikaaram* there are a number of references to the temples of Krishna and Baladeva in the Chola capital Kaavirippoompattinam and the Paantiya eapital Maturai alike.[18] One of the early shrines in the far south is Tirumaalirucholai[19] which finds mention in this epic along with Tiruvarankam[20] and Tirupati[21] as places holy to Vishnu. These references establish beyond doubt the prevalence of worship of Krishna and Baladeva all over the Tamil land in those periods.

CONCEPT OF THE DEITY : (1) Many references in these works especially *Paripaatal* go to form a clear concept of the Deity. The Lord has a divine and auspicious form. The conch and discus are His weapons adorning the left and right hands respectively. The former when blown by Him causes horror to all His foes.[22] He is ever wearing the garland of *tulasi*[23] He reclines on a couch of Aadisesha[24] and is to be found generally in the milky ocean.[25] Lakshmi dwells in the chest[26] of Him who is her Husband[27] The precious stone[28] *Kaustubha* adorns His chest. His garment is golden in colour[29] These are the marks belonging to Him and serve to distinguish

16. TLK. 3, 1; 5; cf. ibid. 30.
17. *Kural* 610. 1103. In the former the reference to the Lord of the three strides and in the latter the adode of Vishnu.
18. CLP. 1 : 5, *ll* 163 to 173; ibid. 2 : 14, *ll*. 7 to 10.
19. ibid. 2 : 11, *l*. 91.
20. ibid. 2 : 11 *ll*. 35 to 40
21. ibid 2 : 11, *ll*. 41 to 51.
22. PRP. 2, *ll*. 36-40.
23. ibid. 13, *l*. 60.
24. ibid. 1 *ll*. 1 & 2
25. ibid. 13, *ll*. 26 to 29.
26. ibid. 1, *ll*. 3 & 9
27. ibid. 3, *l*. 90
28. ibid. 1, *ll*. 9 & 36.
29. CLP. 2 : 11. *l*. 50; PRP. 1. *ll*. 10 & 56; ibid. 3. *l*. 88; ibid. 13. *ll*. 1&2-

Him from other deities. These also show that He has a divine and auspicious form which could not be described correctly[30] but on that account He is not left underscribed by people, who, on the other hand, describe Him in such expressions as are poor and inadequate and do not have actual relevance to Him.[31] For instance, though Krishna, the Lord, is conceived as having two arms, He is in reality having innumberable arms[32]. Here lies His ineffable grandeur. The devotees request Him not to ignore their praise and prayers, but to accept them and bless them not minding their littleness.[33] Garuda is His vehicle[34] and His emblem marks His banner.[35]

(2) The Lord possesses innumerable auspicious qualities. He is the embodiment of *krpa*. He is Himself *dharma* (righteousness). He is the sacrificer of those who are inescapable of treading the right path. He is the pain of those who are opposed to His ways.[36] His words never fail in their import just as day and night follow each other without fail; His patience is like that of the earth; His grace reaches one and all without any partiality as the cloud impregnated with water.[37]

(3) The four *vyoohas* of Paancharaatra school find references in these works. Vaasudeva is held to be dark in complexion having red eyes, Sankarshana to be white with black eyes, Pradyumna to be red and Aniruddha green.[38] The popularity of thePaancharatra cult during the centuries before the birth of Christ is attested by a reference to the temples of Krishna and Baladeva already cited above.

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30. PRP. 13. *ll.* 46-49.
31. Ibid. 5, *ll.* 1-5.
32. ibid. 3, *ll.* 35-45,
33. ibid. 1, *ll.* 34-36.
34. CLP. 2 : 17, *l.* 28; PRP. 3 *l.* 60.
35. PRP. 1, *l.* 11; ibid. 2, 1. 60, ibid 4 *ll.* 36-48; ibid 13. *ll.* 38-39; PRN. 56, *l.* 6; ibid. 58, *l.* 14.
36. ibid. 1. *ll.* 37-40
37. ibid. 4, *ll.* 25-27.
38. ibid. 3, *ll.* 81-82

(4) Among the divine descents of Vishnu those of Koorma,[39] Varaaha, Narasimha,[40] Vaamana, Baladeva and Krishna are treated. While those of Koorma, Narasimha and Raama[41] are dealt with in brief references, those of Varaaha[42] and Vaamana[43] get special attention; but Krishna's descent has a more detailed treatment. Vishnu's greatness as the saviour of mankind receives attention in the descents of Varaaha and Vaamana. Balaraama is often associated with Krishna.

(5) One peculiarity that is noticed in these works is that copious references about Krishna are found. He is mentioned as the tender child of Yacothai.[44] His playing on the flute is felt as rapturous and fascinating by the *gopis*.[45] He is said to play on *veena* also.[46] Some of his deeds are said to be mysterious and are stated to be incomprehensible. For example, the Lord who could use the serpent Vaasuki as the rope for churning the milky ocean become Himself fit to be bound by Yacothai with a rope.[47] Vishnu was not hungry, but devoured the world. However, he ate butter with avidity as though he was very hungry. He used his feet to measure the entire world, but had to use them in greater frequency when He went to the city of Kauravas as a messenger of the Paandavas.[48] These show that He being *maayon*[49] or *maayavan*[50] could introduce mysterious activities in His own deeds. There are also references to the incidents like taking away the garments of the *gopis*,[51] driving the chariot of Arjuna,[52] killing the demon Vatsa[53] and hiding the sun with discus[54].

39. CLP. 2 : 12, *l* 58
40. PRP. 4, *ll.* 11-21
41. AKN. 70; PRN. 378; MNM. 17, *ll.* 9-14; ibid. 5, *l.* 37
42. PRP. 2, *l.* 16; 3. *l.* 24; 13, *l.* 36.
43. CLP. 2 : 17, *ll.* 34, 35; 1 : 9, *l.* 55
44. ibid. 2 : 16, *ll.* 45-46
45. ibid. 2 : 7, *l.* 2; ibid. 27, *ll.* 18-19
46. PRP. 3, *l.* 86.
47. CLP. 2 : 17, *l.* 32.
48. ibid. 2 : 17, *ll.* 32-34.
49. PRP. 15, *l.* 33
50. CLP. 2: 1 , *l.* 14-15, 27-28.
51. ibid. 2 : 17, *l.* 23
52. ibid. 2 : 17, *l.* 34
53. ibid. 2 : 17, *l.* 19
54. ibid. 2 : 17, *l.* 26

(6). Krishna married Neela, the daughter of Kumbha, the brother of Yacothai.[55] Tamil literature has introduced a new person Nappinnai by name[56] and made her play a prominent role in the life of Krishna. She takes the place of Neela in these classics. Krishna and Balaraama had many exploits in the Gokula during which they stood on each side of Nappinnai and danced. They changed their positions and danced again. Naarada is said to have written the work *Naarada-siksha* treating the taala according to which they danced.[57] When Krishna was sporting in the waters of Yamuna with the *gopis*, He took out the bracelet from one of them and made them all feel unhappy[58]. Krishna is stated to have danced whenever there was some activity in which He was engaged. For instance when He broke the tusk of the elephant Kuvalayaapeeda, He danced. And this dance is called *alliyam*.[59] He played *kuta-koothu* dance when He went to fight with Baana.[60]

(7) Balaraama is considered to be one of the *avataaras* of Vishnu and He is quite often treated as having the same status as that of Krishna.[61] He is described to have had the emblem of the elephant in his banner and a single ear-ornament.[62] The paradox in the case of Krishna and Balaraama is that Krishna is held to be the younger brother of Balaraama. But he is very ancient and much older. Really He is between the ancient and the modern. The only way of knowing Him is through the *Vedas*.[63] The paradox that arises here proves only that He is the essence of everything[64] and so He could present Himself anywhere, at any time and in any form He chooses.

(8). Among the *arca* forms the deities at Tirumalai, Tiruvarankam, Tirumaalirunchol ai and Tiruvananta-

55. Cf. *Garudapuraana-Uttarakaanda* ch. 19.
56. CLP. 2 : 17, *ll.* 14-16, 24.
57. ibid. 2 : 17, *ll.* 25-26.
58. ibid. 2 : 17, *ll.* 23-24.
59. ibid. 1 : 6, *ll.* 46-48.
60. ibid. 1 : 6, *ll.* 54-55.
61. PRP. 1, *ll.* 3-5.
62. ibid. 1, *l.* 5.
63. ibid. 2, *ll.* 20-27.
64. ibid. 2, *l.* 20. Vide Parimelazhakar's commentary on this line.

puram are referred to. Tiruvarankam (Sri Rangam) is the holy place on the island created by the branching of the river Kaaviri. The deity there is reclining on the serpent couch.[65] Tirumalai which marks the northern limit of the Tamil country is the hill of Vishnu[66] abounding in many streams. The deity in the temple on the hills is Vishnu the ornaments on whose person are referred to as dazzling in appearance. The sun and the moon are described as the discus and conch of the Lord. The Lord appears like a blue cloud with the sun and moon shining on each side, lightning playing the part of a new garmcnt. He is in the standing posture.[67] Vishnu lies on the serpant couch at Tiruvanantapuram[68] which is also known as Aatakamaatam. The Lord takes His abode anywhere. He chooses His abode beneath the banyan or *katampa* tree or in the island formed between the two branches of a river. He may choose the hill or the form of any other deity. He is present everywhere to carry out the wishes of His devotees and keep them in the path of their duties.[69] *Parippaatal* mentions a temple for Vishnu very near to Mathurai.[70] The place which is also known as Koolavaay has also a temple for aadisesha.[71] The place is also known as Iruntaiyoor[72] which is identified by Prof. M. Raghava Ayyengar to be the temple of Kootalazhakar in Mathuri.[73]

(9) The concept of *antaryaamin* has found a place in these works. The Lord is present in the hearts of His devotees. He is everchcrished by them.[74] Yet, the devotees do not correctly know Him although He is exquisitely described in the *Upanishads* as having the highest qualities and accomplishments.[75]

SUPREMACY OF THE DEITY: (1). The Lord is supreme, in every way and has no equals. There are many references in

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65. CLP. 1 : 10, *l.* 156; 2 : 11, *ll.* 35-40.
66. ibid. 1 : 6, *l.* 30. 1:8, *l.* 1, 2; 2: 11, *l.* 41.
67. ibid. 2 : 11, *ll.* 41-52.
68. ibid. 2 : 26, *l.* 62; 30, *l.* 51
69. PRP. 4, *ll.* 66-73.
70. *Paripaatal Tirattu*, 1, *ll.* 1-6.
71. ibid. 1, *ll.* 60-64.
72. ibid. 1, *l.* 5.
73. *Aaraayci-t-tokai*, pp. 214-244.
74. PRP. 3, *l.* 84.
75. ibid. 4, *ll.* 57-65.

these works to this aspect of the Lord. Vishnu is mentioned as the foremost among gods.[76] He is often referred to as pre-eminent deiy spoken of in the *Vedas*[77] which reveal His greatness,[78] and make Him known. He is beyond the faculties of apprehension even for sages whose intellect is perfected by constant meditation.[79] He is not only greater than the gods but also the demons. He is neither the friend nor the foe of any one. His impartial attitude is thus revealed towards all living beings.[80]

(2) The Lord is the moon and the sun; He is Siva, the god of destruction; He is Brahma, the god of creation; in fact, He is Himself the very destruction and creation. He is Himself the cloud, aakaasa, earth and the Himaalayas.[81] It is because that He is everything that He becomcs indescri bable. There is nothing outside Him which could be brought in for purposes of drawing comparison or contrast with Him. Naturally He is equal to Himself.[82]

(3) The five elements. the sun, the moon and the sacrificer, the five planets other than the sun and the moon, the demons, the twelve aadityas, the eight Vasus, the eleven Rudras, the Ashvins, Yama and his servants, and the twenty one worlds together with the beings inhabiting them arise from Vishnu and grow in Him. This is the truth revealed from the *Vedas*.[83] All these represent him. Symbolically, the vast earth represents His feet, the sea His garment, the sky His body, the directions His arms and the sun and the moon His eyes.[84] The depiction of the sky as His body receives support from the *Taittiriya Upanishad*.[85] This must be the reason for taking the Lord to be blue in colour.[86] In a way, this description of the Lord may be treated as lending support to the relation of self and body (*sareera-sareeri-*

76. ibid. 13, *ll.* 1-13.
77. ibid. 1, *l.* 13; 2, *l.* 58; *ll.* 12-27
78. ibid. 1, *l.* 65
79. ibid. 3, *ll.* 46-52; 4, *ll.* 1-3; PRN 51, *l.* 1; 58, *l.* 14
80. ibid. 3, *ll.* 54-58.
81. ibid. 1, *ll.* 41-48.
82. ibid. 1, *ll.* 50-53.
83. ibid. 3, *ll.* 4-14.
84. NRR. invocatory verse.
85. *Taitt. Up.* 1-6 : 14.
86. PRP. 1, *ll.* 6-7.

bhaava) as existing between Vishnu and the world of sentient and non-sentient beings. In fact, He forms the inner essence of everything.[87]

(4) All the worlds lose their stability and energy day by day and after aeons, become reduced to a stage where their existence could not be made out. The sun and the moon also become extinct by then.[88] Many aeons pass by. After a long time, matter emerges and from it are produced, in the order, *aakaasa*, air, fire, and water, the succeeding one emerging from the antecedent. Aeons roll by and after a long period from the water, earth is evolved. The water is then so swaggering that the earth is on the point of getting fully submerged there. Vishnu takes the form of a boar then and keeps the earth secure. This is one of the countless sports of Vishnu. Vishnu is said to have married the earth known as Bhoodevi. It is humorously remarked here by the poet that this marriage cannot be happy since his first consort Lakshmi is ever present on His chest.[89]

(5) He is the father of Brahma,[90] whom he had created for looking after the subsequent creation. As He is the substance itself and its inner core. He is not living in it nor is there a place beside Him for others to live in.[91] He is the only Lord who safeguards the twenty-one worlds in three parts under the umbrella of His grace, *dharma* being its handle.[92] The twenty-five realities (*tattvas*) serve the purpose of realizing Him through them.[93] He is the protector of all. The discus adorns His right hand[94] in order that He could use it against those who violate His law. He measured the entire region to wrest it from the demon and saved it from deluge taking the form of a boar.[95] He took the form of a swan and saved the earth, with its outstretched wings from the torrential rain of deluge[96]. His ability to vanquish

87. ibid. 3, *ll.* 63-68.
88. ibid. 2, *ll.* 1-4.
89. ibid. 2, *ll.* 28-35.
90. ibid. 3, *ll.* 13-14
91. ibid. 3, *ll.* 69-70.
92. ibid. 3, *ll.* 73-76
93. ibid. 3, *ll.* 77-80
94. ibid. 1, *ll.* 52-53.
95. ibid. 3 *ll.* 19-25.
96. ibid. 3, *ll.* 25 & 26.

the foes and His brilliance are found in the sun. Various objects of nature reflect many of His attributes: His sympathy and splendour in the moon, His tenderness and the liberality in the cloud, His power of sustenance and patience in the earth, His fragrance and effulgence in flowers, His exterior appearance and vastness in the sea, His form and voice in the *aakaasa* and His divine descent and disappearance in the air. All these owe their origin to Him, and exist, as it were, away from Him, but really sustained by Him.[97]

WORSHIP OF THE DEITY : (1) The worship of Vishnu is frequently recommended in these works.[98] Final release from worldly bondage could not be got except by worshipping the Lord.[99] Devotion to the Lord is to be preferred even to the correct knowledge that one can get about Vishnu and His nature.[100] Worship shall be done only at His feet.[101] One shall wish for the enduring security which the feet of the Lord give.[102] The head of the devotee shall be bent before and near His feet. A devotee shall do this with his relatives also.[103] No one shall refrain from worshipping Vishnu's feet which are the source of everything and which are capable of cutting the chain of birth and rebirth.[104]

(2). The devotees of God shall seek Him for refuge. They could offer their worship to God even from a distance if they are unable to reach the place where He dwells.[105] They shall, if it is practicable, live as near the temple as possibe[106] They shall offer their prayers to Him by addressing Him as Kesava[107] and Naaraayana.[108] Even the gods praise Him as the ancient people did.[109] A devotee shall be free from self-conceit because of which Garuda was taught a lesson by the Lord.[110] The ardent devotee feels that he has become

97. ibid. 4, *ll.* 25-35.
98. ibid. 2, *ll.* 5-19.
99. ibid. 2, *ll.* 15-17.
100. ibid. 1, *ll.* 33, 34.
101. ibid. 1, *ll.* 62-65
102. ibid. 1, *ll.* 63-65
103. ibid. 2, *ll.* 66-77
104. ibid. 3, *ll.* 1-2, 15-16
105. ibid. 15, *l.* 35
106. ibid. 15, *ll.* 64-66
107. ibid. 3, *l.* 31.
108. CLP. 2 : 17, *l.* 37
109. PRP. 3; *ll.* 28-30
110. ibid. 3, *ll.* 59-62

fortunate to share the love of God along with others mainly owing to the good deeds done by him in the previous births.[111] The ideal yearning of a devotee of Vishnu is brought to light by describing that the devotee would not feel happy unless he gets the vision of the Lord to serve Him. The ears shall be taken to have served the purpose of their existence by listening to the reputed exploits of Vishnu who measured the entire universe in two steps and who went to the forest as Raama along with His younger brother Lakshmana. The eyes fail to be lucky if they do not behold Him, His hands, feet and mouth. The eyes should keep cast on Him without even a wink. The only act for the tongue shall be to praise Him who went to the Kauravas to run an errand to the Paandavas. Vishnu is here identified with Vaamana, Raama and Krishna in these contexts.[112]

SOME ORIGINAL ANECDOTES : The Tamil classics contain many anecdotes and descriptions of the stories of the *Raamaayana*, *Mahaabhaarata* and *Bhaagavata* which could not be traced to the Sanskrit sources. Three of them which relate to the life of Krishna deserve mention here; they are the introduction of Nappinnai[113] the consort of Krishna in Gokulam, Krishna's breaking down of the *Kurunta* tree while taking away the robes of the *gopa* maidens who were taking their bath in the Yamuna,[114] and His *kuta-k-koothu*.[115]

CONCLUSION : It may, therefore, be concluded that the cult of Vishnu as found treated and referred to in ancient Tamil literature could have come into being in the Tamil country as a result, perhaps of the influence of the religious doctrines which are recorded in Sanskrit works. Yet, the development and treatment of this faith of the hoary past

111. ibid. 13, *ll.* 61-64.
112. CLP. 2. 17 35, 36, 37.
113. ibid. 2, 17 : 16, 28.
114. ibid. 2. 17 : 21; AKN 59 and old commentary.
115. ibid. 1. 6, *ll.* 54 - 5; 5Vide : Subbu Reddiar, N : *Religion and Philosophy of Naalaayira Drvya Prabandham with Syecial Reference to Nammazhvaar* Appendix III.

have been indigenous and exerted profound influence on the unique growth of the cult which is marked by the erection of the temples most of which are found only in the regions where the Tamil language is spoken. It is further noted that the tenets of this faith do not get a systematic treatment and exposition in these source books but they have left an indelible impression on the Tamil Vaishnavite saints known as the Aazhvaars who attached greater importance to the path of devotion than to the other paths. It is not, therefore, a surprise if the principles of the cult of Vishnu as are treated in these classics gave an impetus to the rise of religious poetry at the hands of the Aazhvaars.

2. THE TWO SECTS IN SOUTH INDIAN VAISHNAVISM*

THE two sects in the South Indian Vaishnavism are known as *Vatakalai*, the northern school and *Tenkalai*, the southern school. The former owes its allegiance to Vedaanta Desika and the latter to Manavaala maamunikal. These names, *Vatakalai* and *Tenkalai*, are of very late origin and perhaps belong to a period subsequent to Manavaalamaamunikal. The differences which could have been instrumental in the naming of the two schools have been deeprooted from early times, perhaps in the period which followed the passing away of Raamaanuja. An attempt is made in this paper to consider the probable causes which precipitated such a division in Raamaanuja's school of Vaishnavism, and also a study of these differences is briefly attempted.

Sribhaasyam and *Bhagavad-geeta* do not suggest any clue that could have given rise to any difference in the interpretation of the central doctrines which they deal with nor does the *Naalaayira Divya Prabandham* contain any. It is a matter of common knowledge among the South Indian Vaishnavites at least, that Raamaanuja was taught some secret doctrines by Tirukkottiyoor Nampi.[1] These were known as *rahasyas* and

* Paper presented to the All -India Oriental Conference, 26th Session, Vikram University, Uijain, in December 1971.

1. *Yatiraajavaibhavam*, 58

must have included the three, namely, Tirumantiram, Dvayam and Carama-slokam, the last being taken from the *Geeta.*[2] Unlike in the case of *Brahmasutras*, *Bhagavad-geeta* and *Tiruvaaymozhi* (the important work of Nammaazhvaar), there was no authentic work treating these *rahasyas*. These having been orally transmitted, there must have been ample scope for a preceptor to give an exposition of them in a manner which he felt was not merely the correct one but also authentic. There must have been slight variations in the exposition offered by more than one preceptor for the same *rahasya*. The methods which were adopted by the preceptors in the practice of their conduct must have been different according to individual capacities and these must have a bearing in the interpretations of the *rahasyas*. The disciple also should have taken only such interpretations as authentic and supported them by citing those practices. In fact, there were some practices in the day sof Raamaanuja which called forth criticism from certain quarters.[3] These were individual cases and also represented exception to the general customs. The masters and pupils in the same and succeeding genera tions cited such pratices and chose to treat them as the correct ones, forgetting their departures from the established rules. This, however, was not always the case. The attitudes of others was different towards such practices resulting in the evolution of not two theories, one for and the other against them, but more than two, their number depending on the number of approaches made by them. This resulted in another change of attitude towards tradition. Every interpretation was required to be substantiated by relevant citations from works of accepted authenticity. In their attempt to justify their interpretations, the preceptors and scholars forced their views on the sources and expounded them in a manner that could accommodate their viewpoints. Thus started the differences in the interpretation of the passage in the *Tiruvay*

2. *Bh. G.*, 18 : 66
3. *Guruparamparaa*, pp. 121, 122, 149

mozhi by Tirumaalaiyaantaan and Raamaanuja.[4] Even after the commentary was written by Pillaan on the *Tiruvaaymozhi*, Paraacara Pattar is mentioned, as evidenced in the *Itu* to have expressed disagreement to the views of Pillaan and offered his own.[5] The tone of references to such differences both in the period of Raamaanuja and Paraacara Pattar is only suggestive of these two savants' eagerness to offer a better interprctation and not intended to cross the earlier ones. Much discredit was brought by later scholars for the earliest exponents by reading in between the lines and by asserting the authenticity of their own expositions. The unitary nature of the concepts of *rahasyas* was thus lost sight of. This resulted in the formulation of certain concepts most of them being based on the side of religion. Such concepts were acceptable cnly to one of the traditional schools and drew justifications from the *Naalaayiram* and the passages from the works of earlier writers. There was not much for the two schools of Vaishnavism to quarrel about regarding the matters in the *Sribhaashyam* and the *Bhagavad-geetabhaashyam* which were not therefore cited. The *rahasyas* and the compositions of the Aazhvaars afforded ample scope for the exhibition of the divergences of opinion. While one school interpreted the *rahasyas* and the *Tiruvaaymozhi* without even suggesting a deviated sense for them by remaining faithful to the sacred sources like *Dharmasaastras* and *Aagamas*, the other school swore by the deviation and supported it by the practice of the teacher who was held in the highest respect. It was not the language that effceted this schism. While equal importance was given in one school for the Sanskrit and Tamil sources, the other school stood more by the Tamil sources ignoring the Sanskrit sources when they ran counter to the former and thus attached less significance to Sanskrit sources. For a long period till recently, the followers of the

4. Vide *Itu* on *Tiruvaymozhi* (T.V.M.) 1. 2 : 1; 2. 3 : 3; 5. 10:4
5. Vide *Itu* on T.V.M 6. 5; 2. 4 : 1

Tenkalai system were deeply studied in the Sanskrit sources like *Sribhaasham* and *Geeta-Bhaashyam* for matters of philosophical importance and followed the views of their school in matters pertaining to the *rahasyas* and *Prabandham*. The two sources were thus kept apart thus maintaining in practice the concept of *Ubhayavedaanta*. The Aacaarya was the only guide in these matters for the *Tenkalai* school, while he was also the guide for the *Vatakalai* school.

The differences which keep these two schools apart from each other seem to have taken their rise in the latter half of the thirteenth century and are mentioned by Nainaaraaccaan Pillai, Pillai Lokaacaaryar and Vedaanta Desika in their works. This does not, however, suggest that the two schools were treated then as rivals as they are held today. Vedaanta Desika, who was aware of such differences, remarks that there was no difference regarding the doctrines among the followers of Raamaanuja and there existed only a difference in the interpretation of the same doctrine.[6] The differences must have become marked resulting in the rise of the two distinct schools in the fifteenth century A.D. The *Vatakalai* school traces the origin of their doctrines to Kitaampi Aaccan who was in charge of serving food fort Raamaanuja.[7] The *Tenkalai* school does it to Empaar, the cousin and disciple of Raamaanuja. It is curious to note that neither of these scholars, however, left any written record of their theories.

The main points on which these two sects differed are said to be eighteen.[8] It is worthwhile to consider briefly what these differences are :

1. *GOD'S GRACE* : The *Tenkalai* school insists that the operation of God's grace is unconditioned by human endea-

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6. *Sampradayaparisuddki*, p. 5. 7. cf. *Rahasyatrayasaram* p. 1377.

8. Sanskrit verse in *Astadasa bhedanirnaya*,(also quoted by Sri V. Krishnamacharya in his Sanskrit introduction (p.48) to *Sankalpa Suryodayam*) gives out these eighteen differences.

vour and is absolute. They say that the well-known text "He is to be obtained only by the one whom He chooses"[9], is confirmed by the Caramaslokam of *Geeta*[10] and the mystic experience of Nammaazhvaar. According to *Vatakalais* God's grace though it is uncaused becomes operative only through *bhakti* or *prapatti*, just as the divine tree is considered to yield the results desired by the seekers of them only at their request. Those who are in need of God's grace have to make a request of God for it.[11] They argue that if grace is free and unconditioned, Vaisamya or asbitrariness and Nairghrnya or cruelty would be attributable to the divine nature.[12] In that case, all people would in time be emanicipated, and there would be no need of any effort on their part. If it was supposed that God in his own spontaneity extended His grace to some in preference to others, He would have to be regarded as partial. It is therefore to be admitted that, though God is free in extending His mercy, yet in practice He extends it only as a reward to the virtuous or meritorious actions of the devotees. God, though all-merciful and free to extend His mercy to all without effort on their part, does not actually do so except on the occasion of His devotees. The extension of God's mercy is thus both without cause (*nirhetuka*) and with cause (*sahetuka*).

2. *MOKSA*: There is no difference of opinion as to *moksha* being the ultimate goal. The *Tenkalais* believe that for those who take the course of devotion *moksha* consists in having the experience of God Himself, but those who take to the path of self-surrender have to render service to God even during the state of release. But the *Vatakalais* believe that whatever be the course adopted by the individuals, they become released without any distinction among themselves. They have therefore occasions for experience of God as well as service.

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9. *Kath.* Up. 2 : 23
10. *Bh. G.*, 18 : 66.
11. *Laksmi Tantram* (L.T.) 17 : 78
12. *Vedamasutra* (V.S.) 2. 1 : 34.

3. *MEANS OF MOKSA* : According to the *Tenkalais*, there are five kinds of means, namely, *Karma - yoga*, *Jnana - yoga*, *Bhakti-yoga*, *Prapatti-yoga* and *Aacaryabhimana - yoga* for *moksha*. They believe that *Prapatti - yoga* is a distinctive means from the rest and also believe that each of these five means is a means by itself. But the *Vatakalais* believe that *Bhakti-yoga* is the only other means of *moksha* besides *Prapatti-yoga*. *Karma-yoga* and *Jnana-yoga* are only stages leading to *Bhakti-yoga*. *Karma-yoga* is actually self-purifical tion which destroys egoism and leads to *Jnana-yoga* which is the process of self-realization by self-renunciation, contemplation and the attainment of the orison of *kaivalya*. The third stage is the *Bhakti-yoga* which is the unitive life of beholding God face to face or spirit to spirit. This is the highest realization of reality. Respect for the teachere according to this school, is only a phase of *Prapatti-yoga*.

4. *LAKSHMI* (*HER STATUS*) : Lakshmi occupies an important position in Sri Vaishnavism. But as there are only three categories in the Sri Vaishnavite system, a question may naturally arise regarding the position of Lakshmi in the three-fold categories of *Cit*, *Acit* and *Isvara*. On this point, the *Tenkalais* hold that Lakshmi is by nature atomic in size and occupies a special and unique place of her own below that of Bhagavan; they relegate Her to the level of *jeeva*, the finite being, but consider her as entitled to the service of the selves in this world and to that of the *nityas* and the *muktas* in the world beyond, viz., the region of eternal glory (Nitya Vibhuti). Bhagavan, according to them, is however, the sole *upaaya* for the attainment of *moksha* and Lakshmi has no part in this in the same way as she has no part in the creation, sustenance and destruction of the world. The *Vatakalais* believe that Lakshmi is *akara* and not *makara* or jeeva and state that she is an inseparable attribute of Bhagavan as described in *Paancaratra*,[13] equally infinite and illimitable, without whom

13. L.T. 4 : 1, 2 : 15.

the conception of the Lord is impossible.[14] She is not *anu* or atomic, but *vibhu* or all-pervasive and omnipresent. They base their argument on the authority of *Vishnu-purana*.[15] Lakshmi, according to them, is in every way the object of equal veneration and worship as Bhagavan and that our worship is always to the Lord and His spouse. Being inseparable from Him, She participates in all His activities except in the creation, maintenance and dissolution of the world. She is *seshi* to all of us, *baddhas*, *muktas* and *nityas* as much as Lord Himself. This concept of *Vatakalai* school receives support from the following evidences: (a) The Lord declares that *leela-vibhuti* and *nitya-vibhuti* are the *sesha* for Him and Lakshmi.[16] This means that she is also the *seshi* like the Lord; (b) Paracara declared that Vishnu represents all coming under the category of male and Lakshmi those under the female.[17] (c) Kitaampi Aaccan told Nanciyar that he was taught by Raamaanuja that the mention of the Lord in any context must be taken to have included Lakshmi.[18] This is attested by Parncara Pattar;[19] (d) Sri Ramamisra, the pupil of Raamaanuja declared that Lakshmi and Vishnu together are Brahman;[20] (c) Pillai Lokacaryar states in his work *Tattavatraya*[21] that the eternal kind of the selves refer to Aadisesha, Garuda and others. If, in his view, Lakshmi was a self, she, being eternal, must have been mentioned here.

5. LAKSHMI (*HER POWER*) : According to *Tenkalai* school, Vishnu alone can grant final emancipation. But Lakshmi can play the role of a mediator between the sinning folk and the Lord; she cannot exercise independent or co-ordinate power in granting salvation. The *Vatakalais* believe that both Vishnu and Lakshmi can grant *moksha* and they base their arguments on *Vishnu-puranam*[22] and according to them

14. *Ramayana* (Ram.) 6. 21 : 15.
15. V.P. 1. 8 : 17 and 1. 9 : 124.
16. *Visvaksenasamhita*
17. V.P. 1. 8 : 35.
18. R.T.S. p. 750.
19. *Sri Gunaratnakosa*, 28.
20. This is taken from the author's work *Sadarthasamksepa*.
21. *Tattvarraya* p. 45.
22. V.P. 1. 9 : 118. T.V.M. 4. 5 : 11 "Veri maaraatha poomel iruppaal viani teerkkume"—'the occupant of the most fragrant lotus is the Mother who will relieve us of all our sins and bless us'.

Lakshmi's redemptive mercy is omnipotent. She is not only the mediator (*purushakaara*) interceding and pleading for the pardon of the offences of the selves, but also the *upaaya* along with Her Lord for the attainment of *mukti* by the *prapanna*. Our service after the attainment of *mukti* extends to Her as much as to Bhagavan. The *Vatakalais* say that mithuna or unity of the Lord and Sri is vital to the seeker after salvation. Whatever be the ontological status of Lakshmi, there is no doubt, that both the sects insist on Her *krpa* or mercy as essential to the final release. This beautiful concept is stated in a beautiful way : 'On the one hand, Lakshmi subdues the retributive will of *Isvara* by the beauty of her enticing love and on the other she melts the heart of the sinner by her infinite tenderness.'[23] As the link of love, she mediates between the finite that is impotent, and transforms the majesty of law into the might of mercy. It is perhaps strength (Father) is tempered by sweetness (Mother) and sweetness is supported by strength; the one stimulates and the other persuades. The *Vatakalai* school depends for its position on the following evidences : (a) The *Lakshmitantram* contains a passage which means that the Lord together with Lakshmi is the protector.[24] The word 'together' is to mean that Sr protects the people as much as the Lord. This passage occurs in the context of finding a means for obtaining *moksha*. (b) Sri is addressed as the *aatmavidya* and described as awarding the results of *moksha*.[25] (c) Paracara Pattar says that he would resort to Sri at first and then to the Lord. He desires to do *kainkarya* to the Lord who is together with Lakshmi. He qualifies the word '*Isvara*' here by the words 'as the means of the desired object'. He means evidently that both are the '*upaaya*'[26]. (d) Paracara Pattar wrote a drama with the name *Lakshmikalyanam* in which Nammazhvaar is made to ask the Lord to take him under the refuge of Himself and Lakshmi.[27]

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23. "cetananai arulaale tiruttum, Isvaranai alakaale tiruttum" — *Sri Vacana Bhusauam* 1 : 13.
24. L.T. 28 : 14.
25. V. P. 1. 9 : 120.
26. *Astasloki*, 6.
27. This is cited by Vedanta Desika in *Scarasacra*, p. 46.

It may be added here that the Lord is referred to as Sriman Naaraayana. Sri is the attribute and Naaraayana is having Sri as His attribute. The substantive and attribute may have independent ontological existence as in the case of blue lotus but as a metaphysical category, it must be only one. This is the way in which the *Vatakalai* school maintains its view.

6. *VATSALYA* : The *Tenkalais* define this quality as the enjoyability of the defects of *jeevas*. According to them the pardoning Lord is the God of the sinner and He seeks the evil doer more than He does the *saattvika*, as the target of His grace. They say that the Lord treats the sins committed by the selves as "enjoyable" like garland, sandal paste and others. He even relishes the physical evil or *dosha* in the *prapanna* like the mother who embraces with pleasure her dirt-stained child returning from play, or like the cow which licks the slime on the body of the new-born calf. Similarly God would consider even the faults, offences and short-comings of the self as aggreeable (*bhogya*).[28] To a lover, the dirt on the person of the beloved is far from being hateful. The *Tenkalais* argue that it is the nature of the forgiveness of the Lord to welcome the sinner and not to penalise him for his wrong-doing. They support this theory of theirs by citing the *Raamaayana*.[29] The *Vatakalais*, on the other hand, believe that final action *vatsalya* consists in not taking note of the *dosha* of the *jeevas*; that is to say, the defects are ignored[30]. They point out that the admission of the view of the *Tenkalais* would show that sins ought to be committed as they are to be "enjoyed" by God and expiation for the sins done need not be performed.

7. *DAYA* : The *Tenkalais* hold that God's compassion consists ih His getting afflicted on noticing that of others.

28. *Mumuksup-pati* : Caramasloka prakaranam—Sut. 27.
29. Ram. 5, 18 : 3.
30. Sri Srinivasa practices non-apprehension of the sins of His Devotees. Vide : Vedanta Desika, *Dayasatakam*, 8.

That is to say, it is *'paraduhkhe duhkhitvam'* entering into the sorrows of others and experiencing the suffering of others as one's own. They support this view by quoting the *Raamaayana*[31] To the *Vatakalais*, compassion or *daya* consists of an active sympathy on His part, as manifested in His desire to remove the suffering of others on account of His inability to bear such miseries. In the case of those who could not physically remove others' distress it must be taken to mean entertainment of a desire to remove others' distress. It must include the removal of others' distress in the case of a person who has the power to do so. So, in the *Vatakalai* view, the *Tenkalai* opinion amounts to saying that God will always be in suffering since all the living beings are mostly in a state of suffering. Again to suffer Himself at others' distress will have to be treated as a defect *(dosha)* which would run counter to the concept of God as the abode of auspicious qualities which are opposed to defects (*heya pratyaneeka*). The passage from the *Raamaayana*, which is cited here must be taken to mean that Raama was not in the least really affected but He was acting the role of a protector of people where the definition of the *Tenkalai* would be applicable. This school seeks the evidence of Paracara Pattar,[32] Periyavaaccan Pillai[33] and Sudarsanasoori,[34] who interpreted *daya* as inability to bear others misery.

8, *PRAPATTI:* According to the *Tenkalais, prapatti* consists in the absence of any intiative on the part of the individual, as God's love is spontaneous and will, of itself, bring salvation. Or, it may be taken to mean the knowledge of one's own self as the *sesha* of the Lord. They interpret *prapatti* not as a human endeavour, but a mere faith in the grace of God. A *jeeva* who is completely dependent upon God cannot practise it. The *Vatakalais* say that before resorting to self-surrender or *prapatti* there must be self-effort. It is only when this self effortfails to lead to the realization of God, and in consequence a feeling of complete helplessness and

31. Ram. 2. 2 : 40.
32. *Sri Rangarajastavam*, 2 : 98
33. *Cadyatravavyakhyanam* p. 42.
34. ibid. p. 42.

unalloyed faith in God's grace is firmly entertained, that one can resort to *prapatti.* It is, therefore, in their view, in the form of practising the act of surrecder of one's self. It does not consist in merely possessing the knowledge of one's dependence. The saying of the *Upanished.* "With a desire to get released, I seek shelter"[35] the saying of *Bhagvad-gita* "You take shelter under Me alone"[36] and the sayings of *Lakshmi Tantra* "The Lord expects from the *jeeva* the need for protection"[37] support that the act of surrender has to be practised. The paradox of *prapatti sastra* arises from the Visishtadvaitic truth that the *sarvaseshi* is both the *upaaya* and *upeya*, the means as well as the goal of Vedantic life, and it leads to the dualism between the spiritual effort of the *jeeva* and the spontaneity of the divine grace. The *Vatakalai* school asserts that the soul must exert itself, show a contrition of heart and deathless faith in the Saviour, as the way of opening the flood gates of *krpa* and employes the analogy of the young monkey clinging to the mother for protection *(markata-nyaya)* to illustrate the soul seeking refuge at the feet of the Saviour. The other party asserts that God's grace is like the care of the mother-cat carrying the kitten in its mouth (*maarjara-nyaya*) which is independent of all efforts on the part of the latter illustrating that the soul requires no self-effort.[38]

9. *QUALIFICATION TO DO PRAPATTI* : As regards the person who is qualified for *prapatti*, the *Tenkalais* base their authority on the *Geeta.* In the *Geeta* the Lord deals with various attributes as forming subsidiaries to devotion. Finally He asks to give up all duties. This shows that one who follows this cannot have adequate confidence in devotion.

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35. Sv. Up. 6 : 18.
36. Bh. G. 18 : 66.
37. L.T. 17 : 78.
38. There is a tendency among some of the philosophers to compare the *Vatakalai* and *Tenkalai* views to the volitional type and the self-surrender type mentioned by William James in his *Varieties of Religious Experience*, and the Christian distinction between the justification by works and justification by faith. But the comparison is superficial as the distinction between those two types is entirely different from the Sri Vaishnavite views of *sahetukakataksa* and *nirhetukakataksa.*

Such a person alone, according to them, is fit to take the path of *prapatti*. Again they say that it is only those who study the *Prabandhams* can be fit to be called *prapannas*. But the *Vatakalais* hold that the qualifications to perform the act of self-surrender are having no other course to adopt, miserable position and inability to tolerate any delay on the part of a devotee. The main requirements for the course of *bhakti* or devotion are a clear philosophic knowledge of the realms of *karma*, *jnana* and *bhakti*, the will rigorously to undergo the discipline in due order, and the *sattvic* patience to endure the ills of *prarabdha karma* till it is exhausted or expiated. Yaamuna declares, "I am not devoted to Thy feet. I have nothing and I have no other course to adopt."[39] This makes clear the relative qualifications for the paths of devotion and self - surrender. This does not in any way mean the lack of confidence in the path of devotion on the part of the *mumukshu*. They do not subscribe to the view that the mere reading of Tamil *Prabandhams* will make one a *prapanna* for, in that case, one who reads the Sanskrit passages in the *Upanishads* can become a devotee of God, which is utterly meaningless on the very face of it.

10. *GIVING UP THE DHARMAS* : The *Tenkalais* think that the person who adopts the path of *prapatti* should give up all scriptural duties assigned to the different stages of life (*aarama*); for they argue it is well evidenced in the *Geeta* text that one should give up all one's religious duties and surrender oneself to God. "Abandoning all duties, come to Me alone for shelter."[40] They opine that it is no offence at all for the *prapanna* to give up the performance of *nitya* and *naimittika karmas*.[41] But the *Vatakalais* think that the scriptural duties which are obligatory should never be given up by those who have taken the course of self-surrender.[42] Whatever is done shall be attended with the giving up

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39. *Stotraratnam*, 22. 40. Bh. G. 18 : 66.
41. Mumukshuppati-Caramaslokaprakaranam—Sut. 8. 42.
42. Cf. Bh. G. 4 : 32.

attachment to the result.[43] They further hold the view that the scriptural duties, being the commandments of God, should be performed for His satisfaction by these people. Otherwise, they would have to suffer for their negligence. Raamaanuja emphatically remarks that *nitya* and *naimittika* deeds are to be carried out as they are done to worship God.[44]

11. *CONTRADICTION* : According to the *Tenkalai* view, the path of devotion is by nature contradictory to the *jeeva* who is a *sesha* or one who is in tune with the will of God. The paths of duties and of knowledge assume an egoism which contradicts *prapatti*. The *Vatakalais*, however, say that the path of devotion is not in any way opposed to the nature of the self, but is opposed to only one's miserable condition. The so-called egoism is but a reference to our own nature as self, and not to *ahankaara*, an evolute of matter.

12. *DUTIES OF CASTES* : On the social side, the *Tenkalais* feel that the acts of the *prapannas* are amoral and should not be judged by the moral standards applicable to the ordinary man following the rules of *varnaasrama*, and the question of moral laxity, condemnation or condonation does not arise in their case. Duties prescribed by the *Dharmasaastra* texts could however be carried out only for keeping the social status; but they are not binding on the *prapannas*. But the *Vatakalais* insist on the performance of *svaadharma* or the duties relating to one's station in life even in the stage after *prapatti* as *kainkarya*, and in conformity with the divine command. They support their view on the strength of *Lakshmi tantram*[45] according to which a learned man shall never violate the conduct prescribed in the *Vedas*; these duties have to be performed at any cost. The Lord declared that the *Vedas* and *Smrtis* are His commands. Any one violating what one is ordained by them would become a sinner.[46]

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43. Vide : *Bhagavadgeetabhasya* on 18 : 6
44. Vide : ibid. on 18 : 5, 9.
45. L.T. 17 : 94.
46 Bh. G. 16 : 23.

13. *ACCESSORIES ON THE PATH OF PRAPATTI* : The accessories of *prapatti* are counted as six.[47] The *Tenkalais* hold that the man who adopts the path of *prapatti* has no desire to fulfil, and thus he may adopt any of the accessories according to his capacity and inclinations of his mind. The *Vatakalais*, however, think that even those who follow the path of *prapatti* are not absolutely free from any desire, since they wish to have *bhagavadanubhava*, and do service to God. Though they do not crave for the fulfilment of any other kind of need, it is obligatory upon them to perform all the six accessories as they have been ordained in the scheme.

14. *CAUSE FOR THE ACT OF SELF-SURRENDER* : On the strength of the Upanishadic saying[48] the *Tenkalais* assert that God's grace could not be obtained by mere exposition of religious functions and hence the act need not be performed. But the *Vatakalais* insist that the act of *prapatti* has to be perormed. Their argument is supported by a passage in the *Lakshmitantram*, "This means is considered by Me as both easy and difficult".[49] They further argue that the passage quoted from *Mundaka Upanishad* must be taken to signify the importance of the Lord. It does not indicate that the act of self-surrender shall not be undertaken. If it were to convey this sense, then even *jnana-yoga* will have to be given up, as there is always God who by Himself takes care of everything.

15. *MEANS OF EXPIATION* : The *prapannas* will have their sins absolved by God's forbearance even when they are done voluntarily. Therefore, the *Tenkalais* say, that there is no need to perform any act of expiation. This receives support from the *Geeta*[50] where the Lord declares that He would free the *prapanna* from all sins. But the *Vatakalais* insist that the act of expiation has to be done to get relief from the sinful acts done voluntarily. This will be the course when the *prapanna* has adequate facilities to perform them.

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47. L. T. 17 : 60, 61.
48. Mun. Up. 3. 2 : 3
49. L. T. 17 : 104.
50. Bh. G. 18 : 66.

According to them, repetition of the act of self-surrender shall be the course to be adopted only when the *prapanna* is helpless.[51]

16. *ADORATION OF BHAAGAVATAS*: According to *Tenkalai* ideal, the devotees of God shall be treated on a par with one another irrespective of the caste to which they belong. The *prayanna* is a *bhaagavata* and his spiritual worth is not in any way influenced by his birth and social status and it is one of the greatest offences to treat him with indifference, disregard, ill-will or contempt on the ground of caste. The idea of service extends to all castes and outcastes irrespective of the social distinction determined by *varnasrama* ideal. They support their ideal on the strength of *Mahabhaarata*[52]. The *Vatakalais* say that though the devotees of God have certainly to be respected and should on no account be disregarded, the rules of caste which pertain to the body and not to the soul apply as long as the body endures and not annulled by the act of *prapatti*. There will, of course, be no differernce in the attainment of *moksha* and there will be no such things as castes in Paramapada, but as long as the body lasts, the *prapanna*, too, however great his devotion to God and however pure his life may be, has to follow the rules and regulations of castes in social life. "The temple cow is certainly more worthy than other cows inas much as its milk, butter and the like are used in the service of God, but on that account, it does not cease to be a cow." Similarly, a man of a low caste shall be respected with the reverence due to a devotee as he is superior to all others in his caste.

17. *GOD'S IMMANENCE*: The *Tenkalais* say that God owing to His immense capacity, can enter into a soul which is atomic in size to accomplish acts which could not otherwise be accomplished. The *Vatakalais* assert that God is immanent in the *jeeva* as its *antaryamin* and there cannot be any place in

51. R.T.S. pp. 592, 595, 596.
52. MBh : Asramvaasika paruvam 108 : 32 *Cf.* ibid. 10658.

the world, either animate or inanimate where God is not prescnt, and hence there is no question of God entering any soul.

18. *KAIVALYA*: This consists in having the experience of self alone, otherwise called selt-realization. It may be called a flight of "the Alone to the Alone" in which the self enjoys inner quiet and is self-satisfied. It is different from God-realization. The *Tenkalais* maintain the view that *kaivalya* is not a stage on the road of *mukti* but is *muki* itself in which the *mukta* enjoys the 'peace that passeth understanding'. In this state the *mukta* belonging, of course, to an inferior class, is in some corner of Paramapada and has no hope of intuiting God and enjoying the bliss of communion. But the *Vatakalais* favour the theory that *kaivalya* is only a stage on the path to perfection and those who cross it will eventually reach the divine goal.

There are other minor differenecs also that exist between these two sects. Differences of opinion came into being in many other points of practical importance, such as the extent to which pilgrimage could conduce to salvation, the duties of a *prapanna* if he was a *sannyasin*, the details of ceremonials to be observed on certain special occasions, the extent of the purifying influence of contact with the *bhaagavatas*, the shape of sect mark, etiquette, certain restrictions regarding food and service, the relation between *sannyasins* and householders, the tonsure of widows and so on and so forth. But they have little philosophical or religous basis or backgsound.

The works of *Tenkalai* school which are mostly in Tamil are complementary to those of the *Vatakalais* and not contradictory to them. The eighteen points of difference enumerated above can be reduced to the single problem of *krpa* versus *karma* in its aspect of the practice of *upaaya*. If salvation is antecedent merit and justification by effort, it is said to involve more faith in the inexorbility of the moral law of *karma* than in the inescapability arising from

divine grace. If salvation is by faith and antecedent of grace and guarantees the remission of sin without any condition like remorse, it is said to favour the faith in election and pre-determination and the idea of divine arbitrariness which might lead to the toleration of moral laxity and chaos. Vedanta Desika's view of *vyaja* or occasion seems to be a good reconciliation of the two extreme views. The Lord is Himself the *upaaya* and the *upeya* and the true meaning of human responsibility consists in our responsivenss to the call of divine mercy. Even a gesture and change of heart and the feeling of unworthiness shown in an infinitesimal degree on the part of the sinner evokes sympathy and elicits the infinite grace of the Saviour. A spark of repentence destroys the whole load of *avidya-karma* and thus an infinite series of *karma* is annihilated by infinitesimal effort. It is the recognition of the fact that endeavour consists in recognising the futility of endeavour. This view preserves the idea of divine justice and provides for the domination of divine grace which is its fruition. And if there is any difference between there schools, it is in the starting point and not in the goal. It is, so to say, in the emphasis of aspects and not in the choice of opposing theories. If it is assumed that the human will is in any way free, it conflicts with divine determinism. It is difficult to take the dilemma by the horns or escape between them or rebut it. *Daya* is neither won by effort nor forced on the individual soul. If the prolem is restated in terms of *Sasreeraka Saastra* or *Hetu Saastra* or logic, the distinction becomes philosophically negligible. *Kataahksha* or grace is neither *sahetuka* nor *nirhetuka*. It is based on organic union. Mystic experience is alogical and amoral and it is illegitimate to apply logical and ethical terms to the transcendent law. The gift of grace and self-gift are virtually related like the systole and diastole of the heart; their relation involves reciprocity and responsivenss. The sucking of the mother's milk by the child is instinctively related to the spontaneous secretion of milk and the two form an organic process in the maintenance of life. It is imposible to divide this unitive process and

decide how much it comes from the child and how much from the mother. Similarly, the *jnani* is dearest to God, the *sareerin*, and God is dearest to *jnani*, the *sareera*, and this organic relation is beyond logical analysis. *Daya* pours itself fully into the self and the self flows irresistibly into *daya*; and it is undesirable, so to say, to dissect this living flow into the logical categories of cause and effect.

In conclusion, it may be said that the relation between righteousness and redemption in the working of God in the human history is a holy mystery which is more worthy of reverential study than analysis of logical categories or philosophical dogmas. The *karma-krpa* riddle is the mystery of the religious experience and cannot be lightly dismissed as theological dogma meant for the ignorant. The vexed problem cannot be solved either by logic or by ethics. It can be dissolved only by the direct intuition of God which is the experience of the Aazhvaars. If such is the case, the distinction between the two schools regarding the working of *krpa* is a distinction without much difference.

3. THE AAZHVAARS' CONCEPT OF SALVATION*

IT is well known that according to the Hindu philosophical thought based on the Upanisadic doctrine, *mukti* is the realization of the meaning of the relation between the self and the universal Self enshrined in the Upanishadic text "Thou art That"[1]. According to the Visishtadvaita system it is of much value to abolish the *ahankaara* of the *jeeva* by self-effacement and surrender of the self to the true Self. *Kainkaryarasa* brings out the joy of selfless service. In attuning his naughted will to that of the *Seshi*, the *mukta* feels that he is like a lute on which the Supreme Singer plays. Love is fulfilled in surrender and service; its cosmic value lies in attuning itself to the Infinite. But it is the experience of the bliss of Brahman that expresses the supreme value of *mukti* in the Visishtadvaitic sense of the ecstasy of the unitive consciousness.[2] Then the *mukta* is immersed in the supreme and unsurpassable bliss of *Brahmaanubhava* without losing his self-being. It is a state af *saayuiya* in which the unitive experience of bliss is present without the loss of self experience.[3]

Nammaazhvaar conceives *moksha* as the God's abode and also a place of the freed souls who are the real immortals.

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1. *Chandogya Upanisad*, 6. 8. 7.
2. *Vedunta Sutra* 4. 4. 21.
3. ibid; *Rahasyatrayasara* (*RTS*) Chap. 22.

The Aazhvaar refers to this place in his works as *Veedu.*[4] *Tuyar illa veedu,*[5] *Vin naadu,*[6] *Vaikuntham,*[7] *Vaikuntha vaan naadu*[8], *Vaikuntha maanagar*[9] and *Ponnulaku.*[10] The reference to *Vaikunthanaadan*[11] or the Lord of Vaikuntham signifies that God is the ruler of the city Vaikuntham. *Veedu* is deliverence, i.e. deliverance from the worldly life or *samsaara.* The conception of *Veedu* is not given by Tiruvalluvar in detail but the nearest approach to the Aazhvaar's concept can be seen in *Tirukkural.*[12] But the Tamil saint refers to this place in one instance as *Taamar aik-kannan ulagu*[13] (the world of lotos-eyed God), *Taamarai kkannan* of course signifying Vishnu. The same concept is clearly expressed by Nammaazhvaar as *Arradu parrenil urradu veedu-uyir*[14]-the *jeeva* (soul) once it gives up its attachment to the worldly things, attains *moksha.* The words *vinnaadu, vaan naadu* suggest that the so-called placc of *moksha* is situated far above the world in the endless space. The place is free from misery - *Tuyar illa veedu.* The Aazhvaars, while stating the specific result flowing from a recitation of his hymns, declares that it would lead to *moksa.* Generally the ideal is always described in a positive way such as "those who recite the ten verses will reach Vaikuntham"[15] "the decad on His sacred feet will lead us to His feet"[16] etc. Other Aazhvaars too have the same conception regarding *moksha.* They too refer to *moksha* more or less in the same words and phrases. Other words and phrases employed by them are *peru nilam*—Great land,[17] *peruvisumpu*[18]—"Great space", *umbar ulaku*[19] — "world of Devas", *vinnakam*[20]— "celestial abode" etc. The description of *moksha* by the

4. *Tiruviruttam (TVR)* 95; *Tiruvasiriyam* (TVS) 2; *Periya Tiruvantati* (P. Tv) *Tiruvaaymozhi* (TVM) 1. 1 : 10; 2. 8 : 1 etc.
5. *TVM* 2, 8 : 2
6. *TVR* 23.
7. ibid. 66, 68; *P.Tv.* 53; *TVM* 2.
8. *P.Tv.* 68.
9. *TVM* 4. 10 : 11
10. ibid. 6. 8 : 11
11 ibid. 7 9:4
12. *Kural,* ch. 35-37
13. ibid. 1103
14. *TVM* 1. 2 : 5
15. ibid. 2. 5: 11; 4. 8 : 11.
16. ibid. 4. 9 : 11
17. *Periya Tirumazhi*(*P. Tm*)1. 1:9
18. ibid. 5 : 6 : 5.
19. ibid. 11. 4:10.
20. *Mudal Tiruvantaadi* (*Mu.Tv*) 68

Aazhvaars coincides more or less with the *nityavibhooti* as described in the Vaishnavite *Aagamas* and other Vaishnavite texts.

The path to *mukti* or *moksha* is referred to as *celgadi*,[21] and *maak-kadi*.[22] *Celgadi* is the good path which a *jeeva* has to choose and *maak - kadi* is *moksha*. These two concepts in combination may be interpreted to mean the straight and shining path of *arciraadi gadi* as mentioned in the *Chandogya Upanishad*[23]. Tirnmangaiyaazhvaar mentions this in his *Ciriya-tirumadal*[24] and elaborates it in his *Periya-tirumadal*.[25] The soul travels through the solar rays, reaches the sun, enters through a minute hole in the sun and then attains the place called *moksha* where, it is said, it enjoys the bliss of the Lord. The achievement of a single *mukta* is a cosmic event, as it were, and even the celestials hail the entry of the finite self into infinity and sing *hallelujhas* in their own celestial way. The glorious ascent of the soul to its original home has been vividly described by Nammaazhvaar.[26] It is also beautifully portrayed by Vedanta Desika in his *Paramapadasopanam* where the author indicates nine steps in the path to perfection. The first five, namely *viveka, nirveda, virakti, bheeti-bhaava* and *upaaya* constitute the means and awaken the religious consciousness and induce the *mumukshu* to practise devotion and self-surrender. The remaining four steps consististing of *utkramana, arci-raadi, divya-desa - prabhava* and *praapti* relate to the *summum banum* of spiritual endeavour. They describe vividly the ascent of the redeemed soul to its homa in the absolute.[27] The author, it is presumed, follows the *Vaikuuthagadyam* of Raamaanuja and the *Kausitaki Upanishad* in his description.

According to Vaishnavism, Isvara is the object of the knowledge which is the means, *upaaya*, and also the object of

21. *P. Tm* 1.1:5,8.
22. *Mu Tv*, 95.
23. Ch. Up. 4. 15:5.
24. *Kanni*. 7, 8.
25. ibid. 16, 17.
26. *TVM* 10 : 9
27. *Desika prabandham* - (D.P.) 134 to 150.

the knowledge which is attainment; He is the means as being the giver of the desired fruit and the bestower of grace, and likewise, He is *upeya* because He Himself is the object that is to be reached. He is the ever-attained means (*siddopaaya*). As auxiliary to this means there are two other means, namely *bhakti* and *prapatti*. The former is mainly based upon the teaching of she *Upanishads* and the latter is to be traced mainly to the Vaishnavite *Aagamas*.

The course of *bhakti* involves a training in three stages known as *karma - yoga*, *jnaana - yoga* and *bhakti - yoga* in the progressive realization of *moksha*. These three stages constitute the to-be-attained means (*saadhyopaaya*). The path of *kaarma* means the performance of certain *karma* or rites and duties[28] as prescribed in the *saastras*. One should perform one's duties for the fulfilment of God's purpose; the person should do them whole - heartedly subordinating his desire completely to the divine will. By thus working for the Lord, one not only renounces the fruits associated with them, but also purifies one's heart. This *karma-yoga* has several subdivisions,[29] which include such items as the adoration of gods, the performance of austerities (*tapas*), pilgrimage to sacred places, giving in charity and sacrifices. Some of these rites and duties are referred to by the Aazhvaar. Nammaazhvaar says : "Enjoying the sight of Thy presence with my eyes, and offering flowers culled from all directions to my hands' content at Thy feet and dancing and singing song of Thy praise";[30] "without separation from the Lord, offering Him holy water, and after that, incense and flowers";[31] "are not the days near when I circumambulate and worship with

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28. The rites and duties consist of (i) *nitya - karma* or regular duties to be performed compulsorily (like the daily *sandhyaavandana*) (ii) *naimittika-karma* or rites to be compulsorily performed on specified occassions (like bathing at the time of eclipses of the Sun and the Moon), and (iii) the *kaamya-karma* or rites that are optinal and to be chosen according to one's ability.

29. The *Bhagavad - Geeta* (*Bh. G.*) 4125 etc.

30. *TVM*, 4.7:8.

31. ibid. 1.6:1.

folded palms the deity at Tiruvaaranvilai,"[32] etc. In this process the self-regarding sentiments like self-love and self-possession are subdued. Animal instincts and inclinations are transmuted into an organic craving for God, as the impure gold are transmuted into pure gold in the furnace. The whole process is one of self-realization by self-renunciation. The earth-bound self then becomes spiritualised,

The path of knowledge (*jnaana-yoga*) is a stage of constant and uninterrupted contemplation; it is to be practised by one who has conquerred his mind by *karma-yoga* and could think of his essential nature or the self as being distinct from matter (the body, the senses and the like) his *svarupa* which is the mode of Isvara by virtue of its relation to Him as His body. *Jnaana-yoga* is a path of contemplation, of self-illumination-and of self-renunclation leading to its positive sequal of self-realization. Contemplation is the process of turning the out-going mind within, with the help of yogic auxiliaries like *yama* (self-restraint), *niyama* (observation of rites) and *praanaa-yaama* (the control of the breath) and seeing the inner quiet etc. In this state all activity is swallowed up. The yogin can arrest the out-going tendency by contemplating on thought itself, or on the nature of the aatman. Nammaazhvaar says: "O Father, lend me Thy helping hand of *jnaana* so that I may reach Thy inaccesible feet".[33] When the purified self reflects on itself, all other thoughts go away; the contractions caused by *karma* and the confusions due to *avidyaa* are then destroyed by the fire of *jnaana*. The aatman at this stage returns to itself and enjoys the quiet of *kaivalya*. It is no longer bound by the *prakrti* and its three *gunas*, but attain calmness and serenity. This self-cognition itself is an orientation towards God-cognition. In a higher stage he has a glimpse of *Paramaatman*, the the Supreme Self as the pervading identity in all *jeevas*, and sees Him in all beings and all beings in Him. Tirumalisai-yaazhvaar says: "by completely shutting the gates of the

32. ibid. 7.10:1. 33. ibid. 2.9:2; 1.7:1.

senses, by opening the gate of God-knowledge, by kindlng the blaze of *jnaana*, by making the body and the heart that pine away for God, and by such a fully mature devotion one can realise the Lord with the discus".[34] In the next higher stage, this spiritual experiencc is further enriched. Peyaazhvaar says ; "The *jnaanis* are those, who by means of knowledge, can penetrate the Lord Who is the inner meaning of the four *Vedas* and who is immanent in their hearts"[35] The spiritual insight of *aatmajnaani* is completely acquired in the fourth stage. Here the *jnaani* exhibits universal sympathy, realises kinship for all *jeeva* and regards the joys and sorrows of others as his own. Nammaazhvaar says: "May we all (entire mankind) never more wollow in this woeful state of false knowledge, evil conduct end filthy body"[36]

If a seeker escapes the snare of wordly pleasure and begins to be attracted by the pleasure of enjoying the said spIritual insight that creates a distaste for all sense pleasures, then he begins the practice of *bhakti-yoga*, the direct means for the attainment of the supreme goal of enjoying the Lord. While practising *bhakti yoga*, the aspirant contemplates on the *Bhagavaan* as the Inner Self of his own self which is His body. The vision that he has already acquired of his own pure self is then useful. For it is only through this that he reaches the Inner Self, just as the cloth within which a gem is tied up is first to be seen before the gem itself can be seen. In this way the vision of one's self serves as a qualification or as a stepping stone for the practice of *bhakti-yoga*. The chanters of a hymn of the *Tiruvaaymozhi*, according to Nammaazhvaar, will be blessed with this *jnaana*.[37]

Bhakti-yoga is the special path which is of the nature of unsurpassed love and which has, for its object, the essential nature and form and qualities of the *Bhagavaan* who is not dependent on is not subject to the authority of, and does not

34. *Tiruccanda Viruttam* (*Tc.V*), 76.
35. *Mu Tv*, 84.
36. *TVR*, 1.
37. *TVM*, 1.10:11.

exist for anyone else. It is a process in which the seeker sheds his egoism and egocentric outlook, attunes himself to the will of God and yearns for the eternal communion with Him. This *yoga* is the direct path to perfection as it leads to the very heart of religious consciousness which consists in shifting the centre of reference from the Aatman to the Paramaatman. This stage effects a revolution in our life, which is far greater importance than the copernican revolution. While the astronomer realises the littleness of the earth and the greatness of the sun that draws it to itself, the religious man or devotee realises the emptiness of the earth-bound self and the saving might of God Who is the source and centre of all living beings. The knowledge of the finite self has its religious fulfilment in the integral experience of the infinite which is its ground and goal. The self is merged in the Supreme Self like the sponge in the sea. Nammaazhvaar says: "To the Lord, the sandal paste for smearing is my heart; the garland is the garland of verses composed by me; the silken garment to o consists of these; the bright ornaments are the folding of arms in worship".[38] To this saint, the charming Kannan (Krishna) is everything; He is the food that he eats, the water he drinks, and the betel he chews.[39] Again the Aazhvaar says: "Even if it is not given to me to worship Thee with cool flowers at the appropriate hours, I give over my very life as an ornament to Thy fair head, well decorated with flowers"[40] Periyaalvaar's sentiment of *bhakti* runs like this "Enshrining the deity of Maadhava in the heart and offering the flower of devotion at the point of death will enable one to escape the horrors of the world of death".[41] Speaking further he stresses that the thoughts of the Lord at the point of death will ensure salvation. His foster-daughter says: "To worship the Lord with fresh flowers in a state of purity, to utter His glory with one's tongue and to cherish it in one's heart would burn off the demerits of the past and future as the fire does

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38. ibid. 4. 3 : 2
39. ibid. 6. 7 : 1.
40. ibid. 4. 3 : 4
41. *Periyalvar Tm.* (Periyaal Tm.)

the heap of dust".[42] Similar sentiments are found expressed in the verses of other Aazhvaars also. Among the four kinds of devotees referred to in the *Geeta*[43] and the *Mahabhaarata*[44] the one who worships Bhagavan with exclusive devotion is the best and he attains *moksha*.

Bhakti-yoga has also been called *para-bhakti*. Love of the Lord which results from intimacy with *saattvikas* (and the scriptures) and which produces *para-bhakti* is also called *bhakt*. because it generates an intensive desire to know Isvara clearly. This *para-bhakti* develops into thirst or intensive desire and determination to see the Lord. By this keen desire alone, the devotee wins the grace of Lord who rewards him with a perfect visual perception of Himself for the time being. This visual perception is *para-jnaana*. From this perfect vision of the *svarupa* of the Lord is born an excessive and unsurpassed love for Him and unquench-able spiritual thirst similar to that felt by a man suffering from great thirst at the sight of a tank. This excessive and unsurpassed love for the Lord is called *parama-bhakti* which produces an eager desire and this determination to enjoy the Lord without any limitation.[45] At stage the devotee, as described by Nammaazhvaar,[46] feels that it is impossible to live any longer without this experience of eternal bliss. The Aazhvaar cries out that he would not in future allow the Lord to leave Him (*ini naan pogal otten*) and that he must become one with the Lord and declare all thls with an oath[47] that cannot be ignored by the Lord. This *parama-bhakti* also generates a desire in the Lord to give *moksha* to the *bhakta* immediately and allows him to attain it They are finally united in the realm of *mukti*. The soul is a glow with Divine Fire but is not identical with it. As the life of our life, God feeds the soul and divinizes it. Likewise the soul feeds on God. In the bliss of unitive consciousness, the soul-hunger of God and the God-hunger of the soul are

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42. *Tiruppavaai*-5
43. *Bh.G.*7 : 16.
44. *Santi*, 350 33-35.
45. *RTS*, Ch. 9.
46. TVM, 10. 10:1.
47. ibid, 10. 10 : 2.

both finally satisfied. The temporal pleasures of earth, the seductive joy of *svarga* and the joy of *kaivalya* are nothing when compred to the bliss of the integral experience of Brahman. Here at this stage the soul is not passive, but energises enthusiastically and shares its joy with others.

The other means to *moksha* is known as *prapatti* or unqualified and absolute self - surrender. It is also called *saranaagati*. It is the highest stage of God - love. *Prapatti* stands in the place of *para-bhakti* to the man who adopts it as the direct and independent means. This way preserves the essentials of *bhakti*, dispenses with its non-essentials like the need for ceaseless practice. The question of caste distinctions does not arise here. Since it will be the means of securing all the desired objects, it has been prescribed in the place of *para-bhakti* for those who know their limitations. The spiritual experience of the Tamil Aazhvaars is epitomised in the *saranaagati* of Nammaazhvaar who is extolled as the foremost of *prapannas* in Vaishnavism. The Aazhvaar says: "Henceforward it is imposible for me to possess myself in misery without the *darsan* of Thy feet".[48] He extends the hospitality of his divine experience to the whole world of the *jeevas*, with a view to establish a spiritual community of the *bhaktas*. The saint records his experience in performing the act of self-surrender at the feet of the deity at Tirumohoor: "There is no salvation without surrender to *kaalamegham*, the presiding deity at Tirumohoor"[49] and "The lotus feet of the deity is the only salvation".[50] The peak of his action is seen performed in the presence of Lord of Tirupati Hills. Almost all the Aazhvaars speak of their self-surrender to the Lord.

The paths of devotion and self - surrender have more relevance to the position of God in Vaishnavism than those of *karma* and *jnaana* as such. To fall in line with the Upanishadic concept that knowing Him is the means of obtaining

48. ibid 5. 8 : 7.
49. ibid. 10. 1 : 1.
50. ibid. 10. 1 : 6.

final release,[51] the great exponent Raamaanuja evolved a very convincing exposition according to which *bhakti*, *jnaana* and *prapatti* all represent certain stages of *jnaana* itself. All the same, stress is laid by him more on the *bhakti*, and *prapatti* aspects of *jnaana*. It is in the light of this stress that the three esoteric doctrines have come to be formulated as the basis of the Vaishnavite religion. These three secrets contain the essentials of the Vedanta in terms of *tattva*, *hita* and *purushaartha*. The Lord Himself has expounded the technique of self-surrender. The three secrets are known as *moolamantram*, *dvayam* and *carama-sl kam* of which the first states it in a nutshell, the second makes the meaning more explicit and the third elaborates it still further. These three mysteries which form epitomes of the truths that ought to be known and of the means of attaining salvation, which are the distinctive, unique and exclusive doctrines of this system of religion and philosophy are invaluable and are therefore to be preferred like ambrosia in the ocean.

The state of the emancipated soul has to be understood here. The released self realises the unitive conciousness. The "infinite" of space-time, which staggers the scientific imagination, pales into infinitesimal littleness in the light of the really infinite and the eternal glory of *Paramapada* which transcends the limit of thought. The self enjoys all the perfection of Vaikuntha like *saalokya* or identity of abode, *saamipya* or proximity, *saaroopya* or similarity of form and *saayujya* or intimate union; he is ever immersed in the eternal bliss of the Brahman. *Saalokya* (co-existence) leads to *saamipya* (fellowship) and *saarupa* (transformation and deification) and is consummated in *saayujya* (the bliss of communion). The form, flavour, and fragrance of *Brahmaanu-Bhava* are not physical or psychical, but are super-sensuous.

51. Pillaan on TVM. 10. 9: 1.

4. GOD-SOUL RELATIONSHIP IN THE NAALAAYIRAM*

THE acme of perfection in attributes which is reached only in Naaraayana, the Lord's supremacy and His divine descents are meaningful only when what is other than Him is understood in its true nature. The frequent references which are contained in the compositions of the Aazhvaars to the Lord's having no one as superior or equal to Him prove this. All these which are inseparable from Him have their own individuality, which, however, adds to the meaning of Godhead.

The soul is referred to by the terms 'spirit', 'self' and '*aanmaa*' in philosophy. When the word "*aanmaa*" connotes the finite self or the individual soul, it refers to it as distinct from the body (*utal*), the sense - organs (*intiriyankal*), mind (*manam*), and the vital breath (*piraanan*). "By adopting Sankhyan psychology Visishtaadvaita defines *aatman* negatively as *purusha* different from the twenty-four categories of *prakrti*. The latter is composed of the five gross elements (*bhootas*), the five subtle elements (*ahankaara*), the five cognitive sense organs, the five conative organs, *mannas buddhi*, *ahankaara* and primal *prakrti*. *Purusha* is the twenty-fifth category."[1] Nammaazhvaar realises the nature of the

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1. Srinivasachari, P. N. : The *The Philosophy of Visistadvaita*, p. 283, (The Adyar Library, Adyar, 1943)

soul by the grace of the Lord and describes it in a verse. "The soul is eternal, and is essentially characterized by intelligence (*jnaanam*); the soul which the Lord has condescended to exhibit to me as His mode, or related to Him as the *predicate* is to the *subject*, or *attribute* is to *substance*; the soul which cannot be classified under any category, as *this* or *that*; the soul the nature of which is beyond the comprehension of even the enlightened; the soul, whose apperception by the strenuous mental effort called *yoga* (psychic meditation) is even then not comparable to such perception or direct proof as arising from the senses conveying the knowledge of the external world; the soul (as revealed to me by the Lord) transcending all other categories of things, which could be grouped as 'body' or as 'the senses' or as 'the vital spirit', or as 'the mind', or as 'the will', because destitute of the modification and corruptions to which all these are subject, the soul which is very subtle and distinct from only of these, neither coming under the description 'good' or 'bad'.[2] In brief the soul is an entity which does not fall under the cognizance of sense-knowledge. A close following of the commentary *'itu'* will throw more light on the subject.[3]

The Alzhvaars do not, therefore, treat the nature of the self or the classification of the selves as *nityas*, *muktas* and *baddhas*.[4] However, they are aware of the nature of the

2. TVM 8. 8 : 5
3. Purushottama Naidu, B. R. : *Ittin* Tamizhaakkam Vol. VIII page 209 (University of Madras Madras 1957)
The Aazhvaar throughout his Tiruvaymozhi upto this verse, never bestowed any appreciable attention on the na ure of the soul, for the reason that all his mind and heart was absorbed in the contemplation of the Lord and His blessed Attributes, Glory etc. before which the soul-nature is like the fire-fly before the Glory of the Effulgent Luminary, the Sun. The saint had no time to give to rational meditation (*gnosis*) to realise soul-nature, to the detriment of emotional devotion (*amor*) to realise God. For, as in the manner of the released soul, not caring to waste a thought over the painful memories surrounding the embodied state, the saint who is transported with the revels of his enjoyment with his Lord, the Spouse, never considers it his worthwhile to waste his time ovel a search after the inferior kind of soul-knowledge. However, he sketches a knowledge of this inferior nature, because, as a part and mode and predicate of Himself, God was pleased to bestow this knowledge on him
4. These are respectively known the eternals, the released souls and the bound souls.

selves which could be brought under these categories. Those who are eternal and so do not have to undergo any of the sufferings due to bondage have a clear conception of their relationship to the Lord and their being subordinate to the Supreme Person. Therefore, they dedicate themselves to His service consistent with the work allotted to them. These souls live only in Vaikuntham and accompany the Lord wherever He proceeds. Garuda, Aadisesha and Vishvaksena are some of the important eternals. These and others who are eternally present in the Vaikuntham are also referred to as *nityasuris*. Some souls get the name *muktas* (released) after they leave the worldly bondage through God's grace and enjoy rendering service to the Lord in Vaikuntham. The bound souls are those who suffer the wordly ills. Due to beginningless *karma*,[5] they have their essential nature concealed with the result that they have individually diverse standards of knowledga, potency, and other attributes. They could not have perfect knowledge of themselves nor can they have a uniform realization of God. They include Brahma, Siva, Indra and other denizens of heaven, sages and ordinary men.[6]

The individual soul is stated as being dear to the Lord of Lakshmi even like the gem *Kaustubha*. He can be called the prince, the Lord's son, His disciple, His attendant, His dependent existing solely for Him and His servant. It is His gracious desire that all sould should enjoy His blissful state and attain their goal. The individual self is, therefore, by His essential nature, entitled to the service of his master as his birthright as the eternals themselves. But sunk in the slumber of beginingless *maayaa*, he has fallen into the wilderness of matter, has had repeated births in quick succession, has lost the primary aim of existence, has found no comfort or consolation, has lost the splendour of his real nature owing to evil desires and passions and finally attains immortality by realizing his true nature and purpose. The condition of the

5. Periya. Tm. 4. 7:7; P.Tv. 22; cf. Periya. Tm 1.1 : 1
6. TVM. 4. 10 : 10

soul in worldly life has been aptly described by Raamaanuja and Vedanta Desika by the parable of the young prince who in his boyish way strays away from his royal father enters the huts of wild tribes and identifies himself with them.[7] But a trustworthy friend weans him away from his wicked surroundings by reminding him of his royal destiny and succeeds in reclaiming him. The father who was searching for his lost son is very happy and overjoyed to meet him, and the two are at once reunited in love. Similar is the state of the soul, who belongs to God and who identifies himself with the body, loses his real character and assumes a different nature. He sleeps in and as matter in the pralaya state and subjects himself to the wheel of worldly existence with all its hazards and hardships till he is made to realize his folly by a loving preceptor. He at last retraces his steps, regains his self knowledge, is freed from the fetters of *karma*, and enters his home in the absolute. The freed self withdraws itself for ever from the twenty-four *tattvas* of *prakrti* in the same way in which it entered into them and became practically a mode of matter. Being *Brahman* he becomes *Brahman*.

The Aazhvaars hold the view that Naaraayana is the creator, protector and destroyer of the Universe. Their view is based on the central principle familiarly known as *satkaaryavada* according to which nothing new comes into being, nor is anything created out of nothing. "As a spider moves along its threads, and as from a fire tiny sparks fly in all directions, even so from this Self (God) come forth all organs, all worlds, all deities and all beings. Its mystic name is the 'truth of truth' *(satyasya satyam)*"[8] This idea is expressed by Nammaazhvaar as follows : "The Lord of the Eternals created Brahmaa, Siva Indra and the Rishis. and the whole sentient and non-sentient beings single-handed by the mere wish."[9] The proeess of involution and evolution is spoken of by the Aazhvaars as *'Untu umizhtal'*. They refer to the

7. *Sri Bhasoa* 2.1; 4 and RTS Chapter 1.
8. *Brhad Ardnyaka Upanishad* 2.1:20; *Tiruvarankattu Maalai-18*
9. TVM 1. 5 : 4

Lord as *moovalaku untu umizh tevapiraan,*"[10] "*jnaanam murrum umizhnta naatan*"[11] and so on; At a time when there was no world or any living being, He became the inherent cause (*vittu*) for the world.[12] The delightful class of gods, the sentient beings belonging to the mortal group and the inert matter and the lustrous luminaries like the sun and the moon blossom forth in Him, that is, were in the dormant stage till they got manifested by Him from Him.[13] He is both the father and mother, thus being the inherent cause of every thing, existing permanently in all three times-present, past and future.[14] He is rightly called *aatipiraan*, the primal protector, as He created all the gods, worlds and beings and has been protecting them.[15]

The noumenal self as *purusha* is free and eternal, but somehow "it gets phenomenalised, becomes bound to *prakrti* and is caught up in the causal necessity of *karma*"[16] Each act of *karma* leaves behind an impression or mark on the mind. The successive action of similar type deepen the impressions which assume the form inherent inclination or prediliction. The moral experience of the good and bad deeds is ultimately traceable to the responsibility of the empirical self. If the soul falsely identifies itself with *prakrti* and its *gunas*, it becomes a sensitive self or the product of nature; it is phenomenalised and subject itself to the external determinations of sense inclinations and becomes a slave of desire. But if it exercises its moral freedom it realises its noumenal nature as a spiritual being and attain self-mastery and autonomy. The self can become a dog or a god with its immense potentialities and no being on earth or beyond can destroy its conciousness. As the sower of the seeds alone is answerable for the harvest

10. Ibid 8. 9 4 cf Ibid 4.2 1;8.10 4; 9.3; 2; 9. 9 : 2
11. Periya Tm 4. 8 · 6; cf ibid. 4. 10 : 5; 5. 7 : 9; 5. 9 : 2; 5. 10 : 3
12. TVM 1. 5 : 4; 8. 10 : 4
13. ibid. 2.9 : 6
14. ibid 2.6 : 10
15. ibid 4. 10 : 1
16. *The Philosophy of Visishtaadvaita* p. 311

man harvests the types of fruits according as the type of the seeds he sows. All the souls are conditioned by the law of *karma*. *Karma* causes rebirth and rebirth adds to the propensity of the evil, and this vicious circle throws the souls into the maelstrom of misery.

No doubt God is good, and therefore the existence of evil and other imperfections has to be traced to the freedom of finite self. Moral freedom is a real choice between different possible courses of action, and the soul is responsible for the choice of the evil; and God is responsible not for the choice between good and evil, but for the pleasures and pains that follow the deed. The existeace of evil in the divine plan is only a bare possibility, but it is the self that makes the possible actual and enjoys the fruits of *karma*. Pleasure and pain are desermined by the nature of *karma* and they vary with different persons at different times. Nothing *cit* or *acit*, is intrinsically good or bad, plesant or painful and the hedonistic value of a thing is relative to the moral difference caused by *karma*.[17]

It may be asked why God, who is the well-wisher of all living-beings, allows the souls to suffer, and why does He not grant cessation of these sufferings. God is always inclined to bestow His grace. He is eager to confer salvation on those who seek His protection. But owing to man's desire the Lord agrees to keep him here in this world for some time longer. He avails Himself of those *karmas* which have begun to yield their fruit (*prarabdha*) and which are the cause of these sufferings, and punishes these men of hard hearts in order to correct them as a father and the like would do in the case of such as their sons with a whip at hand. It is therefore, proper to consider such punishments as special favours, a sort of blessings in disguise. According to Parasara Pattar even a disease could be a teacher for us, as it would create a

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17. *Sri Bhaashya* 3. 2 : 12

repentence in our mind. Koorattaazhvaan, the disciple of Raamaanuja, on losing his eye-sight did not long for his eyes again, as they would make him look at the object of sense-pleasures.'[18]

The sufferings are therefore intended only to reveal, to some, their offences with their consequences and then conceal them in order to create utter disgust, disgust like that of Tirumankaiyaazhvaar who says: "My mind cannot bear the thought of living in a house in the roof of which there is a serpent"[19] so that thereby they, too, might long for their release from the worldly life which God has already made up His mind to confer on them. So emancipation is a combined process *gracia operans* and *gratia cooperans*. In such contexts aspect of sorrow or pain is the fruit of the evil deeds in the past. Among these, some punishments are the fruit of certain good deeds in the past which have begun to operate (*prarabdha*). When the crow (Kaakasura) fell at Sri Raama's feet praying for life, the Lord gave him his life; the fruit of his *prapatti* was full and complete. Even the punishment inflicted on this wicked crow whereby he lost the sight of one eye was not really of the nature of punishment. It was, as it were, a special form of favour, because it would prevent him from doing evil again.[20]

The self thus requires opportunities to bear the consequences of its doings. It requires for this purpose a medium in the form of a physical frame. The residues of the deeds, through they are present with Him, could not by themselves determine the nature of the body that is required for exhausting them, nor can the soul do it, for if it can, it could have had easy control over its residues. In its helpless state, the Lord determines the nature of physical body in accordance with those residues in order that the experience of them

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18. Somewhat as Milton reconciled himself to his blindness.
19. Periya. Tm. 11.8 : 3
20. Periyaazhvaar refers to this incident. Vide Periyaazh Tm. 3.10:6

through that particular body would enable to exhaust them. In self-multiplication and creation of the world, this is the main motive of the Lord which also explains why certain selves are made to obtain their coming into being in particular places and to possess certain specific bodies. Merits and demerits of the selves thus are the accessories for God in creating the world.[21]

God is called the InnerSelf or Soul (*sareeri*), because as long as they exist, He is, in regard to sentient beings and non-sentient substances, their Support, their Controller or Ruler and their Master (*seshi*) for whose purpose they exist. Sentient beings and non-sentient things form His body, since with regard to Him, they stand as substance supported by Him, controlled by Him, and existing solely for the fulfilment of His purposes throughout their existence. This truth of God as the *sareeri* of all beings is clearly intuited by Nammaazhvaar who says "My Lord is one who informs all objects and creatures that appear on the earth, on water, in the atmosphere, in fire and in the firm expanse of space, and at once interpenetrates and transcends all these objects internally and externally, much like the soul in forming the body,"[22] and again "He extends in a hidden form into every minute object, in every minute region on earth and in the worlds above just as the universe extends spaciously through the atoms of water which go to make the ocean."[23] One comes across many verses in the whole of his works and in the works of other Aazhvaars expressing the same sentiment in different ways.

God is said to be the *seshi* of all things, because they exist solely for the fulfilment of His purposes. The relationship may be paraphrased as the owner-owned relationship. In using sentient beings and non-sentient things for His own purposes, God's glory is manifested. This si *seshi*. "*Acit* or

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21. *Vedaantasaara* 2.1 : 34; *Br. Up.* 4.4 : 5
22. TVM 1. 1. : 7 23. ibid. 1.1 : 10

cit is not a being-in-itself, but a being-for-another. Matter exists as a medium for self-realisation, and self-realisation is not for self-satisfaction, but for the satisfaction of the-Inner Self.'"[24] The Infinite enters into the finite and evolves into the names and forms of the finite and resides in them as their eternal Inner Ruler. The divine purpose consists in the deification of the self by the Universal Self entering into it and infinitising it. This concept of *sesha-seshi bhaava* or the owner-owned relationship is well intuited by the Tamil seers of Vaishnavism. Nammaazhvaar says: "*tannul anaittulakum nirka, nerimaiyaal taanum avarrul nirkum piraan.*"[25]—'The Lord with all the worlds infolded within Him, infolds Himself in them' and again "Having entered my heart through His affection, He pierced me in two, became life of my life, and drew it into Himself.[26] The Lord stands in the relation of a *seshi* to both sentient beings and non-sentient things in common. In relation to non-sentient things He is *seshi*, because they exist for His purposes. In relation to sentient beings endowed with intelligence, He is *seshi* in the special sense of being Master whom it is their duty to serve. In being *sesha* to the Lord the selves share in common with non-sentient things but are *seshas* in the special sense also of being His servants.

It may be asked what this sentient being does gain by being supported and controlled by Him and by existing solely for His master. The answer is that by having the Lord as support, the self becomes an inseparable attribute of the Lord even like his own attributes *jnaanam* and *sakti*. By being the Lord's *sesha* and by having the Lord as his *seshi*, the self acquires a taste for an ultimate goal which is appropriate to his essential nature, for every being aims at a goal suited to the conception held by it about its nature. By being the *sesha* of the Lord and by having Him as his con-

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24. *The Philosophy of Visishtaadvaita* p. 182

25. TVM 9.6 : 4

26. ibid. 9.6 : 3

troller and ruler, he comes to know the specific means (viz. Lord) of attaining the goal or ultimate aim suited to his essential nature. This means that the Lord Himself is the only proper means for the attainment of this end and that He does not require any auxiliary aid for helping Him. It follows therefore that this sentient being has no other support, exists for nobody else, and has no other protector than the Lord. This relationship of *sesha-seshi* between the self and Lord is disclosed in the first syllable of the eight-lettered *mantra* viz. '*oom*'.

This hypostatic relation of the soul to a God is clearly brought out in the line "*atiyen ullaan utal ullaan*"—'He inheres in the soul and He inheres in the body'. An anecdote has been recorded in the commentaries in respect of the explanation of this concept.[27] Once when Raamaanuja was holding his holy court of religious discussions, there arose among the audienc the question whether the soul is proof of *jnaanam* (intelligence) and *aanandam* (bliss) or *sesatvam* (leigeship). Though Raamaanuja was perfectly informed in the matter, he wished to see the truth expounded by his preceptor, Tirukkottiyur Nampi. He sent his disciple Koorattaalvaan to Tirukkottiyoor to learn from Nampi the truth. After six months of waiting upon the great Aacarya, the Aazhvan was not able to know the truth as the Aacaarya condescended not to reveal the truths. The Aazhvan thereon asked his permission to return to Raamaanuja when the Acaarya condescended and put across the answer in a cryptic sentence in which he quoted Nammaazhvaar's pharse "In me the vassal". Later the Aazhvaan explained the meaning thus: "When the Aazhvaar uses '*atiyen*' elsewhere, he means the body to be at the fore in the body-soul. For example, in the phrase "*atiyen ceyyum vinnappam*"[28] the word '*atiyen*' does not

27. Purushottama Naidu, B. R.: *Ittin Tamizhaakam* - Vol. VIII. 8.8 : 2 (commentary) (University of Madras, 1957)

28. *Tiruviruttam*-1

signify the soul since the soul without body cannot make an appeal to the Lord. Similarly in *atiyen ciriya jnanattan*"[29] the word '*atiyen*' does not stand for the soul. The participation of the body is inevitable in the context for the phrase that follows the above is '*kaanpaan alarruvan*'. So also in the verse preceding the one under discussion.[30] But the verse under discussion (8.8.1) for the reason that. '*ullaan*' meaning that 'He inheres in the body' follows '*atiyen ullaan*', '*atiyen ullaan*' specifically expresses the soul, bringing out that the Lord inheres in the soul as well as in the body. But the nature of the soul is described to be that which is intelligent and blissful. But these attributes are of little account. What characterizes the soul is its relation of liegeship (as creature) to God, the Lord (as creator)=(*Seshatvam*)" The *seshatvam* of the soul is thus established.

29. TVM 1.5 : 7 30. ibid. 8.8 : 1

5. THE NAALAAYIRAM AS DRAAVIDA VEDA*

THE South Indian Vaishnavities consider the *Naalaayira Divya Prabandham* or the *Naalaayiram* in shortened form, the anthology *par excellence* containing the hymns of the Aazhvaars as *Draavida Veda* for many reasons. In this paper those reasons are examined and discussed.

The compositions of the Aazhvaars which constitute the *Naalaayiram* contain reference to the *Vedas*[1] and to God as known or proved by the *Vedas*[2]. The *Vedas* go after Him searching Him[3] who expounded them[4]. Several places where are situated the sacred shrines are described as inhabited by those who are well studied in the *Vedas*[5] and as resounding with the recitation of the *Vedas*[6]. This is a clear proof to show that the Aazhvaars came in the hue of *Vedic* tradition which they followed and recorded in their compositions.

It is from the composition of Maturakaviyaazhvaar that the worth of Nammaazhvaar's *Tiruvaaymozhi* is known as

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1. Peri. Tm. 5 5:9; 7.7:2; TVM 8.3:2
2. ibid 5.6:1; 8.4:1; 8.10.1; 11.8:9; TVM 1.6:2; 1.8:10; 2.7:2; 2.9.8; 3.1:10; 3.3:5; 3.4:6; 3.5:5; Tc. V 14, 117; Nac' Tm 4.10:2; Nan Tv 13 etc
3. ibid 4.1:6; 4.8:3, 7
4. TVM 2.10:10; I. Tv. 48
5. Peri. Tm 2.10:10; 3.8:4; Periyaal. Tm. 4.4:1; TVM 5.7:9; 10.8:10
6. ibid 3.10:5; TVM 5.9:3; 7.3:1,4

valuable and great as that of the *Vedas*. Nammaazhvaar is stated here to have sung in sweet Tamil the thousand verses which represent the contents of the *Vedas*[7]. The inner sense of the *Vedas* is fully brought out by him[8]. This evidence comes from one who was the immediate disciple of Nammaazhvaar whom he served and by whom was taught the *Tiruvaaymozhi* and the other three compositions.

Naathamuni was virtually responsible for the spread of the *Naalaayiram* and for making its recitation obligatory both in the temples and houses. In the Sanskrit *taniyan* when he composed in honour of Maturakaviyaazhvaar, he refers to this Aazhvaar as deriving delight only by the simple recitation of the *Upanishads* of Nammazhvaar. He was the beginner of the tradition which declares the compositions of Nammaazhvaar as *Upanishads*. In the Tamil *taniyan* about the same Aazhvaar he refers to the Aazhvaar as Sathakopa who rendered the *Veda*, into Tamil : '*Vedam Tamil Ceyta Maaran*'. In the *taniyan* to the *Tiruvaaymozhi*, he refers to the work as the ocean of *Draavida Veda* comparable to the *Upanishad* which has thousand recensions. The *Saama-veda* is spoken of as having thousand recensions. The *Upanishad* which is attached to this *Veda* is *Chaandogya* and Naathamuni's stand is that the *Tiruvaaymozhi* is a Tamil rendering of the *Chaandogya Upanishad*. It is obvious from this that in Naathamuni's opinion, the *Tiruvaaymozhi* is an *Upanishad* and that too as the *Saama-veda*.

According to Isvaramuni, the son of Naathamuni, Nammaazhvaar rendered the *Vedas* into the *antaati* type of Tamil.[9] Raamaanuja states that *Tiruvezhuk-koorrirukkai* of Tirumankaiyaazhvaar contains in entirety the import of the *Vedas*[10]. Among the immediate disciples of Raamaanuja, Anantaazhvaan held that Sathakopa composed the *Veda* in

7. KC - 8 8. ibid. 9
9. *Taniyan* beginning with '*tiruvazhuti-naatu*'
10. *Taniyan* beginning with '*ceeraar*'

Tamil[11]. Arulaalap - purumaal Emperumaanaar refers to Nammaazhvaar as having composed *Tiruvaaciriyam* in *aaciriyappaa* metre and as the expounder of the *Vedas*[12]. Paraacara Pattar refers to the *Tiruvaaymozhi* as *Tamil Veda* in thousand verses[13] and as the music of the *Veda*[14]. The same scholar describes Aantaal as preaching through the *Tiruppaavai* the *seshavritti* that is taught in the *Upanishads*. This last reference has much significance in as much as the *Tiruppaavai* does form part of the *Tamil Vedas*. In addition, it is the cream of the *Vedas*, as what is taught through *Vedaanta* is taught in this piece.

The *Aaraayirap-pati* of Pillaan is extolled by Manavaalamaamunikal as conveying the import of Nammaazhvaar's *Veda*[15]. Vedaanta Desika refers to the Aazhvaar as having rendered the *Vedas* into Tamil[16]. Naathamuni is said to have taught the *Tamil Vedas* in musical setting[17]. Tiruvarankattamutanaar makes frequent references to the *Tamil Vedas*. Poykaiyaazhvaar wrote in pure Tamil about the purport of the *Vedas*[18]. So also did Tiruppaanaazhvaar[19] and so was strung a garland of *Tamil Veda* by Tontaratippotiyaazhvaar[20]. The imports of the *Vedas* which are beyond the reach of the people were brought out by Sathakopa in thousand sweet Tamil verses[21]. Raamaanuja had the realization of the import of the *Vedas* composed by Nammaazhvaar[22]. Through Raamaanuja's services, the *Vedas* which reveal Naaraayana became delighted and the pure *Tamil Vedas* composed by Nammaazhvaar continued to flourish[23]. What is noteworthy here is that eminent

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11. *Taniyan* beginning with *'eyianta'*
12. *Taniyan* beginning with *'kaaciniyor'*
13. *Taniyan* beginning with *'vaan-tikalum'*
14. *Taniyan* beginning with *'mikka irai'*
15. URM-41
16. *Guruparampara*-saara-verse 2 (Tamil)
17. ibid - last verse
18. RN-8
19. ibid-11
20. ibid-13
21. ibid-18
22. ibid 46
23. ibid-54

scholars of the *Vedas* like Periyaazhvaar[24] and Maturakavi-yaazhvaar composed hymns in Tamil in praise of God and Aazhvaar respectively. Vedanta Desika refers to the preceptors as holy (bhagavan) who are proficient in the *Tami' Vedas*[25]. He calls the composition of Nammaazhvaar '*samhita*' a word which is widely used to refer to the *Vedic* texts[26].

It is thus noticed that after Naathamuni, the *Naalaayiram* became reputed as *Tamil Vedas* and the *Tiruvaaymozhi* as the *Upanishad* in Tamil. The two works *Draamidopanishat - sara* and *Draamidopan ishattaatparya ratnaavali* which are in brief the sum and substance of *Tiruvaaymozhi* lend support to this tradition of thought. This shows at the same time that the other three compositions of Nammaazhvaar as also those of other Aazhvaars were treated simply as the *Vedas*.

The first twenty-one verses of the *Tiruvaaymozhi* convey clearly the purport of the *Vedaanta* system. They represent the twenty-one recensions of the *Rg-veda*. The thousand verses which are set to music represent the *Saama - veda* teachings in thousand recensions. This composition abounds in the delineation of the eight sentiments and so represents the *Athar va-veda* which has eight recensions. Hence the *Tiruvaaymozhi* shall be taken to represent all the *Vedas*[27]. This is only an attempt to justify that the Aazhvaar's composition *Tiruvaaymozhi* is *Tamil Veda*.

Curiously enough, attempts were made in this period to declare that the *Tiruviruttam*, *Tiruvaaciriyam*, *Periya-tiruvantaati* and *Tiruvaaymozhi* represent the essential teachings respectively of *Rg*, *Yajur*, *Atharva* and *Saama vedas*[28]. This identification does not stand to reason. The *Tiruviruttam*, which is the work

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24. The very title '*Pattar*' shows that Vishnu - cittar was a *Vedic* scholar and the author of commentary on the *Kalpa-sutra*. One of the passages in his compositions suggests his acquaintance with the Poorvameemaamsa rules (vide RTS p 545)
25. RTS p-523
26. *Dramidopanihat-taatparya-ratnaavali* p-4 cf *Paadukasahshra* 1:3
27. *Dramidopanisat-taatparya ratnaavall* 5cf ibid 10
28. Vide AH Sut 50; URM 9. The printed texts contain references of this kind at the beginning of these compositions

of Nammaazhvaar, begins with a reference to the worldly sufferings and a request to God for listening to his humble petition for rendering service at His Feet. The work shall rather be taken to contain the incidents which take place in life in order to get freed from repeating them. The name *Tiruvaaciriyam* refers to composition in *aaciriyappaa* metre. It represents the supermacy of Naaraayana and His Glory. *Periya-tiruvantaati*, which is composed in *antaati* scheme and in *venpaa* metre depicts the *parama-bhakti* of the Aazhvaars and it is for this reason that the word *'periya'* which means big is used as the adjective here. The fourth composition, the *magnum opus* of this Aazhvaar, is *Tiruvaaymozhi* which is not merely an utterance that issues out of the mouth but is great and supreme and hence has the adjective *'tiru'* being prefixed to it.

On the contary, any attempt at establishing parity between these four compositions and the four *Vedas* would only lead to confusion. The *Vedas* as such could be interpreted as expression of the Lord's greatness, and in that sense alone these four compositions and those of all other Aazhvaars could be deemed as the *vedas*. Too much has been made of the fact that Nammaazhvaar's compositions number four and also the fact that Tirumankaiyaazhvaar's number six, so that an equation is sought between the four *vedas* and Nammaazhvaar's four works and similarly between the six *'vedankas'*[29] and the six works of Tirumankaiyaazhvaar. The two *Matals* and the *Taantakams* of Tirumankaiyaazhvaar have nothing in common with any of these nor could *Periya-tirumozhi* be identified with any of them. The *Tiruvezhukkoorrirukkai* is more a *citrabhanda* (acquistics) than an ordinary piece, and does not have any comparison to *sikshas* or *chandas*. Moreover there is no justification to treat these six compositions as auxiliaries to the four Compositions of Nammaazhvaar. And Moreover, it remains to be explained as to what place the

29. The ancilliaries are six in number viz, phonetics (*sikshas*), grammar (*vyaakarana*), prosody (*chandas*), etimology (*nirukti*) astronomy (*jyotisa*) and ceremonial texts (*kalpa*).

compositions of other Aazhvaars would occupy among the *vedic* texts. When these two sets of these compositions exhaust the comparison with the *vedas* and their auxiliaries, the other compositions should either cease to be designated as *vedas* or given some other names such as *Upa-vedas.* All these attempts would lead to draw unjust and invidious distinations among the compositions of the Aazhvaars. The proper procedure that deserves to be adopted is to admit the tradition that has been handed down from Naathamuni and treat the *Tiruvaaymozhi* as an *Upanishad* of the *Saama-vedas* the composition being based on the same number of recensions of the *Saama-veda* and that of verses in the *Tiruvaaymozhi.* The remaining compositions in the *Naalaayiram* represent the *vedas* as such. There is on need to mark out some of them as identical with a particular *veda* nor it is proper to treat the other three compositions of Nammaazhvaar as other three *vedas.*

The traditional commentators and exponents simply held that the four thousand verses of the Aazhvaars are the Tamil renderings of the purport of the four *vedas*[30]. It was suggested by the Vedaanta Desika, in the conext of maintaining the parity between the *Tiruvaaymozhi* and the *vedas,* that this composition of Nammaazhvaar represents the essence of the four *vedas*[31]. All the commentators of *Divya Prabandham* as a whole or in part have recognized that Nammaazhvaar composed the four compositions in the order of *Tiruviruttam, Tiruvaaciriaum, Periya-tiruvantaati* and *Tiruvaaymozhi.*[32]

Naathamuni refers to the *Tiruvaaymozhi* as the ocean of *Tamil veda* which is comparable to the *Upanishad* of *Saama-veda.* The basis for maintaining this comparison is not hard to seek. The *vedaanta* system, which is based on the Sanskrit sources, is said to have triple foundations (*praasthaana-traya*)

30. TP/384
31. *Draamidopanishat-tat paryaratnaavali* 5, 8
32. ibid 126.

of which the *Brahma-sutras* formed the chief subject of study and exposition. These *Sutras* which were complied by Vyaasa represent the authentic exposition of the philosophical enquiry of the tenets of the *vedaanta* school following a particular order in the treatment. Thess *Sutras* were prepared following the traditions maintained in the *Saama-veda.*[33] Neverthless, they became the foundations of the *Vedaanta* tradition for the followers of all the branches of the *vedas*. This is eveident from the larger number of citations made by the exponents of these *Sutras* from the *Chaandogya-Upanishad* than many others. That these *Sutras* were adopted by the followers of other *Vedas* as well is clear from the profuse citations made from *Brhadaaranyaka*, *Taittireeya*, *Aitareya* and *Mundaka Upanishads* which belong respectively to *Suklayajur-veda*, *Krsnayajur veda*, *Rg-veda* and *Atharva-veda* not to speak of many other *Upanishads* like *Svetasvartta* and others. Besides these. relevent passages are cited from the *Samhita*, *Braahmana* and *Aaranyaka*portions of the *Vedas*, *Bhagavad-geeta*, *Vishnupuraanam* and others showing thus that all these sources of knowledge represent a unified whole. Yet the fact remains that the essence of the teachings of the *Brahma-sutras* belongs to the *Saama-veda*. It is in this light that Naathamuni should have treated the *Tiruvaaymazhi* as the *Upanishad* of the *Saama-veda*. Maturakaviyaazhvaar who was a follower of the *Sama-veda*, declares that Nammaazhvaar had brought the full import of the *Vedas*. Naathamuni and Maturakavi are not really contradicting each other, as what is taught in the *Saama-veda* is also conveyed by other *Vedas* and their *Upanishads* and the *Vedantins* did not find any discrepancy in citing freely the passage from more than one *Veda* and one *Upanishad* to support an intepretation in the same context. Perhaps the recent attempt as establishing the parity of the four compositions of Nammaazhvaar with the four *Vedas* represents overshooting the mark, revealing the zeal to reconcile the statements of Maturakaviyaazhvaar and Naathamuni.

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33. Belwalker, SK : *Vedaanta Philosophy* (1929); p 141

The outpouring of the heart mellowed by the deep sensuous realization of the *arcaa* form of the deities at Tirumaaliruncolai, Tirukkurunkuti and other places, the sudden outburst of the mental anguish caused by severe disappointment at the loss of the divine communion and the contemplative expressions at the dizzy heights of the Lord's eminence and His descents providing easy aceessibilty to the suffering mankind were experience discontinuously had by Nammaazhvaar with the result that there is not found in this composition the sequential treatment of these experiences. It is therefore apt to maintain a likeness between the *Tiruvaaymozhi* and the *Chaandogya Upanishad* or for that matter any other *Upanishad* or even the *veda* which contain various currents of thoughts which are not presented in a particular order. It is therefore all the more appropriate to refer to Nammaazhvaar as seer[34] like the seers of the *mantras*. Hence the *Tiruvaaymozhi* can both be a *Samhita* and an *Upanishad*.

The commentaries and the sub-commentaries of Pillaan and others on the *Tiruvaaymozhi* containing profuse citations from the epics and the *Puraanas* bear comparison to the *Bhaashyas* on the *Upanishads* and the *Vedas*. As in the sphere of the *Vedic* studies, here too there are differences in interpretation noted within the frame of *Vaishnavism*.

Some *Vedic* scholars took objection to the study and recitation of the verses composed in languages other than Sanskrit. The following are the grounds on which their objection is based: (i) The languages other than Sanskrit are not sacred and so do not deserve a special status for composing prayers. (ii) If these languages are used for spiritual purposes, women and *sudras*, who are forbidden the study of the *Vedas*, would learn these compositions and use them for holy purposes. (iii) The *Tiruvaaymozhi* was composed by Nammaazhvaar who was born in the *sudra* caste and as such what he composed shall not be studied or recited by the Brahmins. The

34. *Paadukaasahasra* 1.3

Aazhvaar's composition could not be the source for gaining knowledge about Brahman. (iv) Unlike the *Vedas*. these verses could be understood only by the people who lived in a particular region where Tamil is spoken and understood. (v) Even though those who are qualified to study the *Vedas* but do not do so, take to these compositions. (vi) The compositions speak about love (*kaama*) which is opposed to the teachings of the Vedas and *Smrtis*. (vii) Lastly, these works speak of *kaivalya* which is said to be the *purusaartha*.

Nanceeyar, who noted down these objections cites a verse from *Matsayapuraana*[35] referring to Kaisika and others who sang in different languages. He notes that in the same context Yama is reported to have declared that recitation is only of those verses which do not deal with God. Nanceeyar adds that if because what is written in a particular language is to be rejected,then what is written in Sanskrit could also be rejected with the result that the Sanskrit language could be given up. The Aazhvaars composed these compositions in Tamil in order that even women and *sudras* could make use of them for prayers. Though born in the *sudra* caste, Nammaazhvaar received the Grace of God and therefore became possessed of the real nature of *tattva,hita* and *purusaartha* and so was qualified to deal with philosophical matters. He is thus superior to Vidura, Sabhari and others. Those who had attained much proficiency in literatures of other languages like Sanskrit appreciate these compositions. The words *'vedana'* and *'upaasana'* which are mentioned in the *Upanishads* mean devotion which the *Tiruvaaymozhi* refers to as *kaama. Aisvarya* and *kaivalya* are rejected in these compositions as the results got through them are little and unstable. These compositions cite the *Vedas* as evidances for the doctrines they preach[36].

Vedaanta Desika[37] without reference to this objection states that the songs composed in languages other than

35. *Linga-purana* 23:43, 44 36. *Nine Thousand* 36-37
37. *Draamidopanishat-taatparya-ratnavali*-4

Sanskrit are commendable. The following are the reasons stated in this connection : (i) The Lord Naraayana is dealt with in these compositions. (ii) In accordance with this statement[38] that the Lord is to be worshipped as if He were a youthful king, intoxicated elephant or a dear guest, He is to be worshipped as king. This means that the servants could use their own languages while attending upon the kind who becomes delighted with the service. The language that is used here is of no consequence. (iii) The Tamil language was devised and developed by Agastya. The members of all the castes could make use of this language. Like the epics and *puraanaas* which are supplementary to the *Vedas*, the *Samhita* of Sathakopa reigns supreme in this respect and is superior to them. That is, it offers a splendid exposition of the purport of the *Vedas*. It is further said by the same author[39] that a language other than Sanskrit must be adopted, if necessary that being helpful in the better understanding of the *Vedaantic* truths.

The fact that could be gathered from the stand taken by Nanceeyar and Vedaanta Desika on the place of *Naalaayiram* is that the compositions of the Aazhvaars are based on the teachings of *Vedas*. They are thus not preaching anything which could be considered as antognistic to the *Vedic* truths. These works contain references to the *Vedas* and to some recentions[40] as well and so are to be considered as expositions of the *Vedic* teachings in a different medium, namely, Tamil. they are certainly intended for the use of women and *sudras* who are forbidden the study of the *Vedas* and for those who inhabit the Tamil Nadu and who know the Tamil language. The epics and *puraanas* are supplementary to the *vedas*. In a similar way these shall be considered as the supplements of the *vedas*. They are not tha *Vedas* themselves but are the *Vedas* in Tamil in so far as they serve the purposes which the *Vedas* serve. Many a matter whose source could not be traced to the *Vedas*

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38. *Saandlya Smrti* - 4: 13
39. *Satsampradaya Parisuddhi* pp 35-36
40. Peri. Tm 3.4:1

were visualized by the sages, namely, Aazhvaars, and dealt with in these compositions and as such they have come to be treated as the *Vedas* themselves. For intsnace, the worship of the *arcaa* form of God, and devotion to God and to the devotees of God are dealt with in the *puraanaas*, but they were brought to the people at large by the *Aazhvaars*. The doctrine of self-surrender though traceable to the *Paancaraatna Aagamaas*, became popular only through the compositions of the Aazhvaars. The greatness of the *Veda* lies in its being the store house of knowledge which is not available through any other means. That is, the *Vedas* became the supreme authority as a source book of knowledge about ultimate truths. Similarly these matters which have attained popularity only through the *Naalaayiram* justify the compositions of the Aazhvaars to get the appellation of the *Vedas*.

A perusal of the life accounts of the Aazhvaars would reveal the fact they were mystics who composed these poems merely through inspiration. It is not made clear how they were able to divine the ultimate truth and present it in a wonderful manner. To this extent, they could be treated as the seers (*drshta*) likethe *Vedic* seers. The eternal truths are presented by the seers either through the *Vedas* or through these Tamil compositions.

After the neriod of Naathamuni, one and the same scholar had deep grounding in the *Vedaanta* and Sanskrit sources and that is based on *Tiruvaaymozhi*. The highlight of the adoption of this kind of training is found in the *Upaya-Vedanta* concept which was anterior to Raamaanuja in origin andsecures on reliable evidence, to have been held as a title by Tirumalai Nampi[41]. Vedaanta Desika held it to be his proud privilege for calling himself as the follwer of the *Tamil Veda*[42] as he would claim to be the follower of the branch of the

41. *Yatiraajavaibava* - 1
42. TP. 384 '*Cantamiku Tamil Maraiyon*'

Veda. A further result of this training lies in the traditional study of the *Tiruvaaymozhi* with commentaries, as one of the four texts[43] taken up for spiritual study under a preceptor. Further, the *Naalaayiram* is studied from the preceptor as the *Veda*. Raamaanuja as we know, had the *adhynayaa*ofthe *Tiruvaaymozhi* at the feet of Tiruvarankap-perumaal Araiyar and had the exposition af the feet of Tirumaalaiyaantaan.

The concept of *Upaya*-*Vedanta* was only in so far as the study and realization of the ultimate Reality. Like the *Vedaanta* among the *Vedic* texts, *Tiruvaaymozhi* is more popular among the compositions of the Aazhvaars. Yet, like the *Veda* of a particular recension, the entire compositions of all the Aazhvaars have importance of the scheme of spiritual training of the Vaishnavites. Hence those who have studied these compositions of the Aazhvaars are called '*Tamil Maraiyor*'[44] - 'Tamil brahmins'

43. The other three are (i) *Rahasya-grantas*, (ii) *Bhagavad-geeta Bhaashya* and (iii) *Sri Bhaashya*
44. cf RTS Chap 5, '*Marainool tantavetiyar*'

6. BRIDAL MYSTICISM OF THE AAZHVAARS*

THE experience of God which falls to the lot of the mystic is one of joy and calm which could be described as the milder aspect of mysticism. The disappointments which the mystic feels when he could not approach God or when he does not have the vision of God imbedded in him shows his sufferings of pain of a negative kind. These aspects of mysticism as experienced by thc mystics continually leave indelible impressions with them making them recount their experiences with joy at times and with sorrow at others. The Lord is the storehouse of innumerable, ineffable virtues which sustain the mystic by drawing him very close to Him and yearn for reunion when the material factors pull him away to his world. The moments of union with Him fill him with much feeling. The purpose of such a life is the experience of the bliss of esoteric joy which is not altogether distinct in feeling, though different in the nature of feeling from the enjoyment of the sensual kind which a woman longs to have and experiences in the company of a man. It could therefore be said that a mystic whether man or woman has much of the nature of the woman. More often that not, the mystic passes through the several stages which a bride undergoes in the periods of wedding-day and honeymoon. To this extent, the mystic exprience of a devotee could be described as bridal in its aspects.

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The view that God is the Bridegroom and the devout and ardent soul of the devotee, the Bride, is an allegorical expression of the intimate communion between the soul on the one hand and God on the other; this mystic view, expressed in beautiful and sensible figures and similes has been prevalent both in the East as well as in the West. In what would be called the spiritual marriage (*aatma-vivaaha*) the Lord descends from His almightiness to the human level of lowlines, and longs for the joyous embrace of, and union with, the human soul. The Vedaanta philosophy of Nammaazhvaar and Raamaanuja interpreted as Vaishnavism defines Brahman as the absolute as God the Beautiful (*Bhuvana Sundara*) and regards this mystic experience of communion with Him as the consummation of the philosophy of love. In this process the soul, rendered ugly by *karma*, is purified and transformed into His own nature. It is a matter of common knowledge, at least among the philosophers, that God as Lord is feared, as father revered, as mother honoured and served, but as Bridegroom is loved. Love is not a contract nor holy sentiment but its own end and is love for love's sake. The soul is inwardly embraced by the arms of the wisdom and it tastes of the heavenly sweetness. The presence of the Beloved is felt in the interior of the soul. In the divine influx of the union, all self-feeling is transformed and divinised.

> "Love wrapped me in its all-dissolving powers
> I saw not, heard not, moved not, only felt
> His presence flow and mingle with my blood,
> Till it became His life and His grew mine
> And I was thus absorbed."

This is how Shelley gives expression to this transforming power. All these suggest the relationship of the ideal lovers. This spiritual realisaion becomes the story of the love of the soul the betrothed becoming the wedded love, losing itself in the embrace and rapture of union with the Lord.

Bridal mysticism has been well explained by the commentators of the *Naalaayiram*. The Cankam literature has

idealised love; its poetry of love is the poetry of the noumenon. As the Vaishnavite commentators point out, the Aazhvaars start singing in 'taanaana tanmai' i,e. as themselves as men but in the white heat of their passion for God they lose themselves and sing in 'piraattiyaan tanmai' i,e. as the lady-love. In the Aazhvaars, hymns, the whole of a hymn is either in 'taanaana tanmai' or 'piraattiyaana tanmai'. Azhakiya Manavaalapperumaal Naayannaar has beautifully summarised this aspect of Aazhvaars in the aphoristic sutra style as, 'Jnaanattil tan peccu; premattil pen peccu'[1] -in the path of *jnaana* there is the speech of the poet as himself; in love there is the speech of the poet as the lady who loves. The idealised love of the Cankam age, purified still further by Tiruvalluvar in his immortal *Tirukkural* and identified with God by Tirumoolar, is revealed in all its concrete elaboration in this story of the love of the eternal lovers-the soul and God. The Aazhvaars and the Naayanmaars turn themselves in their poetry into women pining for the embrace of God.

The mysticism of spiritual marriage must be interpreted very carefully as having spiritual content and value. *Kaantabhaava* (karpu) is the experience of the bride and the bridegroom. *Mathurabhaava* (kalavu) is the experience of clandestine love. Both are free from carnality and fleshly lusts. The craving for contacting God is clothed in the language of sex borrowed from the science of erotics. It is therefore some times misunderstood and erroneously spoken of as erotic mysticism. But it must be borne in mind that those who criticise have completely ignored the transcendental experience of the Divine presence and the influx of the Divine love which passed human understanding and surpasses the psychological ways of knowing. The symbolic terminology employed here is entirely free from morbidity and erotomania; there is nothing degrading about this love. What is *Bhagavatkaama* is transempirical and it is described here as *vishaya*

1., A. H Sutra, 118.

kaama; but the difference between them is like that between the dog and the dog-star. It is nothing but a method of explaining the unknown by the known; and the method is pressed into service since there is no other popular and psychological way of expressing the inexpressible. But all these are metaphors and symbols; for the Real transcends all this terminology. The ecstatic joy of the mystic is the joy of his union with God.

The Aazhvaars and Naayanmaars speak this language of love in giving expression to their mystic experience. *Kaama* there, is not *Vishaya-kaama* or sensual passion; it is *Bhagavat-kaama*, spiritual love. "Kannanukke aam atu kaamam"[2]-is the Vaishnavite explanation of Tiruvarankattamutanaar. The classical explanation of *kaama* is given by the sage Yajnavaalkya, the super vedaantin to his worthy wife Maitreyi at the time of his renunciation or resort to *sannyaasa*. The sage imparts to her in imperishable language the meaning of *aatmakaama*[3]. *Kaama* may be of three kinds viz. *vishaya-kaama*, *aatma-kaama* and *Bhagavat-kaama*. *Vishaya-kaama* is desire for the objects of sense, and its satisfaction is momentary and fraught with pain in all its stages, and it lands one finally in the wilderness of *samsaara*. One has then to retrace one's steps and follow the way of *aatma-kaama* by self-control and introversion. The joy of self-realisation is, no doubt, enduring but it arises from the flight of the 'alone to the alone' and being in a state of solid singleness, it is tinged with egoism.

2. RN 40. The word 'kaatal' employed in *Akam* poetry denote the kindness to all sorts of relatives including husband and wife (*Aink.* 195; *Nar* 241, 237; *Akam* 275, 310). It has gradually enlarged to express all kinds of love, and has become asynonym with '*anpu*' and '*parru*'. The general idea implied in the use of the word is the mental attachment between the being that loves and the object of love irrespective of physical contact. The word '*kaamam*' is now understood to mean a reckless indulgence of sexual impulse. In Cankam period normal physical passion was meant by this word (*Akam* 28). The bodily union of the lovers is known by '*kaamakkoottam*' (*Tolkkappiyam* 3. 3. 1). Tiruvalluvar names the third part of the book *Tirukkural* as '*kaamattup-paal*' and removes the sting in the word.

3. Br. Up. 4.56.

Bhagavat kaama is love directed to the Lord who is the source and centre of all human love. When *kaama* is spiritualised and directed Godward, it loses its sting and is reckoned a virtue. *Kaama* is the urge of love, but as *Bhagavat-kaama*, it is a craving for the spiritual marriage with the Beloved. Love is a relation between the *aatman* and its eternal 'other' the *Paramaatman* and is a longing for the communion. When it becomes an infinite longing for the infinite as in the case of Maitreyi, it leads to immortal bliss. When, therefore. instincts are harmonised and spiritualised,they become the eternal creative expression of Divine Love. Not only *kaama*, but even *krodha* (anger), *dresha* (hatred) when directed to God with devotion lose their sting and become transformed into the mystic instinct for the Infinite.[4] Evil is changed into goodness and goodness into godliness as Brahman permeates all beings and brahmanises them.

The importance of the conception of God as Cosmic Beauty becomes significant when the Lord steals our hearts as '*kalvan*'[5]-'*patiran*'[6]-'*peraalan*'.[7] He is the *purusothama*, where all souls become His beloved in love with Him, a love which transcends even the love of the husband and wife. To the Hindu mystic, the *tattva* is Brahman the Beautiful, the *hita* is *prema* and the realisation of the bliss of Brahman is *Purushaartha*. *Prema* is thus the copula between the knowledge of Brahman and the realisation of its bliss. *Brahmaanubhava* may be mystically explained by the experience of love and beauty. The *Bhaagavatam* and the *Bhagavat vishavam* are the treasure houses of this experience. The *Bhaagavatam* is the homeland of divine *leelaa*; and the *Tiruvaaymozhi* the outpouring of Nammaazhvaar, is the spiritual biography of the eternal game of divine love. To the Hindu mystic-philosopher, Brahman is *ananda* and *rasa*. The universe has its source and sustenance only in the bliss of the Brahman. It is the theatre, so to say, of the *leelaa* of God which aims at turning men into seekers after salvation.

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4. *Bhag. Pura* 10. 29: 15
5. *Peri. Tm.* 3.7: 1; cf.*TVM* 2.2 : 10
6. Ibid 3: 7: 2
7. ibid 5. 5 : 8

Sex is the secret device of the Divine Artist by which the animal instinct is harmonised and spiritualised. If *kaama* as sexual feeling is not humanised,it is bestial and blind, clamant and chaotic, and becomes a deadly vice. But when it is idealised and disciplined into married love, selfishness disappears, and the fleeting voluptuousness of reckless adven ture is replaced by the lasting happiness of perfect pleasure. If it is further spiritualised into divine love, it loses all traees of sefishness and becomes ethereally ennobled. While mystic experience may be gained by the way of *yoga*(ascetic introver-sion) or *bhoga* (hedonistic extraversion), the way of the latter or the aesthetic religion has an irresistible appeal to the mystic who follows the method of *Bhagavat-kaama.* There are instances for both the types in the lives of the Aazhvaars. Pey aazhvaar was God-mad from his very birth and he may be considered as one who had followed the yogic path. But the life of Tirumankaiyaazhvaar was quite different. At first he indulged in *vishaya-kaama* or hedonistic pleasures and later on became a convert to *Bhagavat-kaama* for contacting God as the Bridegroom. To the Saivites the Lord is a Yogi among yogis and a Bhogi among bhogis; and the Naayanmaars call both yogis and bhogis as tapasvins and therefore bhogis are those who enjoy *Bhagavat-kaama.*[8]

The concept of *Akattinai* has its bearing on the hymns of the Aazhvaars when they express their spiritual quest and conquest. The bride is the soul that yearns for divine union and the Lord who is the Soul of the soul and is one with it and oned with it is the eternal Bridegroom. The joy of the first union *(punartal)* or *samslesha* is momentary, but it gives a foretaste of the immortal bliss in future. The union is follow-ed by *vislesha* (*pirital*) or the woes of separation. The forlorn bride is sickminded and desolate and suffers from the agonies of separation as the heroine in the Cankam literature

8. Dorai Arangaswami, M. V : *The Religion and Philosophy of Teevaram* p. 1244

does; her beauty fades away and her spirits are depressed.[9] In her helpless state the bride sends message of unrequited love to the Lord through the herons, the bees and the cloud and His love is stirred by their moving power.[10] The Lord is then moved by love and at long last the lovers are united and the spiritual wedding takes place. The lover and the beloved, the *naayaki* and the *naayaka*, are two in one and one in two, like the sun and its light, or the word and its meaning, or the flower and its fragrance. *Krshna-prema* the quintessence of mystic love in its purity and perfection, as enshrined in the *Bhaagavatam* attracts the Aazhvaars, especially Aantaal, Nammaazhvaar and Tirumankai-yaazhvaar. Their expression of the love of God through the medium of *naayaki-naayaka* love is unmatched in mystic literature for its moving power. The commentators of N*aalaayiram* bring out the beauty of the *Akam* poetry of the Aazhvaars by renaming the saints as feminine poetesses: Paraankusa Naayaki (Nammaazhvaar), Parakaala Naavaki (Tirumankaiyaazhvar) etc.

The Aazhvaars, especially Nammaazhaar, Trrumankaiyaazhvaar and Aantaal, are pre-occupied with Krishna-prema, mystic love in its pristine purity and perfection as enshrined in *Bhaagavatam*. Apart from other modes of worship of the Lord such as chanting His names, contemplating his auspicious qualities, His personal beauty, the glory of his shrines situated in the various places in our country and the greatness of His devotees (*Bhaagavata* worship) the Aazhvaars employ their love as an interesting mode of enjoying a relationship with the Lord-that of imagining themselves to be the bride of Lord, a habit which is part of the general cult of *Mathura-bhakti* or *Naayaka-Naayaki bhaava*. This mode is a special

9. This state of suffering is aptly called by the Christian mysties, 'the dark night of the soul' and it expresses the infinitc 'hazards and harships' of the divided life.

10. In Cankam literature it is found the heroine in a contex of despair giving expression to her feeling of desolation by addressing the birds, bees and begginning them sometimes to go and fetch the hero (*Narr*. 54, 70, 105) This motive has been successfully employed by the Aazhvaars.

feature of their hymns which are in the form of utterance spoken by the maid companion, by the mother and by the lady-love or the bride of the Lord herself;[11] yet they all centre on the relationship between the Aazhvaar-naayaki and the Lord. The essential dependence of the souls of the Aazhvaars on the Lord leads them to establish this kind of intimate contact with the Lord. Though the language and terms of physical relationships and physical pleasures might be employed, these ultimately point to deeper spiritual non-physical meanings. The terminology of love-relationship is used more or less as a sort of sugar-coating so that the higher truths are made the more easily consumable.[12] When the maid-companion is introduced in a group of hymns as describing the condition of the Aazhvaar-naayaki, she is to be taken as uniting the Aazhvaar-naayaki and the Lord for the reason that the soul of the Aazhvaar deserves to be united only wity the Lord, a link which is implicit in the first word of *Tirumantiram*, namely, "Om" (aum). When the mother of the Aazhvaar-naayaki is introduced in another group of hymns as restraining her, it is meant to suggest that the Lord Himself will take the initiative and show the way without having to make extra-ordinary efforts. This idea is implied in the second word of *Tirumantiram* namely, '*Namah*' (namo). When the Aazhvaar-naayaki speaks in her own person in the third group of hymns, what is implied is the irresistible desire of the Aazhvaar-naayaki to acnieve union with 'Naaraayana' (the third word used in the *Tirumantiram*) in all the aspects of His glory and splendour, which will not brook any restraint or delay.[13]

The whole of the *Tiruvaaymozhi* is the presentation by Nammaazhvaar of his God-experience. Twenty-seven decads

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11. This type of composition is known as *anyaapadesa* mode of utterance. By adopting this mode, different levels of emotion are beautifully presented, and an effeet of interesting variety is attained.
12. *Iraiyanar Akapporul* - sutra 1 (Commentary - the meanings of the 'kaama')
13. A. H. - sutra 133 (Vide Manavaala Maamuni's commentary). The commentator brings out beautifully the three different states of mental consciousness.

of this work, contain the vivid expression of the Aazhvaar's experience as the bride of the Lord. The Aazhvaar was in the state of trance for several years,[14] and the result of this experience is contained here. During the milder stages of mystic experiences, the Aazhvaar is continually conscious of his disappointments in being unable to have union with the Lord. A rather continuous, rhapsodical outpouring of the heart surcharged with feeling would be tedious from the artistic side of the composition. In order to avoid such monotony, the Aazhvaar seems to have hit upon a plan for treatment. He himself gives expression to his love as the bride in seventeen decads[15] The bride, whose passion gets beyond control, may not be able to control it and may also be exposed to the public through her abnormal and unwomanly behaviour. The mother of the bride is therefore interested in keeping her daughter within reasonable limits of conduct. The one aim of hers is to see that her daughter is made to get married to the proper man and make her lead a hapoy conjugal life. Therefore she tells her visitors and friends that none but the Lord whom her daughter loves could afford relief to the sufferings of her daughter. There are seven decads of this kind in the *Tiruvaaymozhi.*[16] The maid-companion of the bride also shows her interest in her welfare and speaks of the means to get her united with her husband.[17] This is dealt with in three decads.[18] One of the three decads occurs in the fourth centum, where the nature of the self as *sesha* of the Lord is depicted, another in the sixth centum which is devoted to treat the means of getting at the Lord and the third one in the eighth centum wherein the result of the means namely, God-experience, is dealt with. The companion is thus

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14. The period was sixteen years (Divya-suri caritam 4: 44)
15. TVM - 1.4; 2.1; 4.8; 5.3; 5.4; 5.5; 5.9; 6.1; 6.2; 6.8; 7.3; 7.7; 8 .2; 9.3; 9.7; 9.9; 10.3.
16. ibid 2.4; 4.2; 4.4; 5.6; 6.6; 6.7; 7.2.
17. This character is introduced in *Akam* poems to cut short the furtive course of thc lovers and induce them to get married as early as possible.
18. TVM 4.6: 6.5; 8.9.

shown to be helpful to the bride. The mother's feelings about the well-being of the daughter are well placed in the second centum where the nature of the Lord is treated, in the fourth which shows the attitude of the self to the Lord, in the sixth where anxieties and sympathies for the adoption of the proper course to get at the Lord are dealt with and in the seventh where the goal to be achieved is treated. Such a treatment fulfils an artistic effect by relieving the monotony of the narration and also shows that the intoduction of the mother and companion serve two specific purposes. The first purpose is that these two do not play any role as in the melo-drama, but are, in virtue of their personal relationship to the bride, shows to reveal their abiding affection for her and the keen interest to see her united to her husband. The other purpose lies in the choice of women as showing their interest n her welfare and giving expression to their cares and anxieties about her. Had even only one male member been shown as having spoken about the condition of the love-lorn bride, the charm of the entire composition would be thrown into winds, While it is admitted that all the souls are only brides for the Lord, yet there is more tenderness in the feelings when they are depicted as exhibited by the women folk under the extreme stress of love in separation. Though the Aazh-vaar is only a male mystic, he had rightly chosen the mother and the maid-companion of the bride.[19] who could better represent the mental agony of a woman in suffering than a male member.

The irresistible love of the mystic is closely associated with the physical form of God, whether it is in the supreme form (*para*) or descent (*avataara*)or the indweller(*antaryaamin*) or *arcaa* (idol). The lady in love gets fascinated by the figure which she recapitulates by representing or referring to any incident or episode of the Lord in one or more of His descents or in temples. At times, a synthesis is effected by treat-

19. Following the tradition of the Cankam poetry of the Early Tamils.

ing more than one of such forms as being equal appeal. Of the twenty-sexen decads which treat of bridal mysticism, nine decads[20] and three verses[21] in a decad are mainly intended to show that the Aazhvaar was uncontrollably passionate in his love for the *arcaa* forms of the Lord. It is interesting to note that of these five occur in the fifth and the sixth centums which deal with the means of getting at the Lord, three find room in the seventh and eighth centums where the result of the endeavours is recounted and one occurs in the nineth centum which treats the obstructions that lie in the path of God-realisaton. Also, the *Tiruviruttam* of Nammaazhvaar which contains a centum of verses presents the various aspects of love which the Aazhvaar has for the Lord.

Bhagavat-kaama as bridal love is different in kind from *vishaya kaama* as *kaama* is really no middle term between the two. *Srngaararasa* or erotic joy is contrasted with *Brahmarasa* or the bliss of Brahman. The Aazhvaar is free from the taint of *kaama* and carnality. but owing to his aesthetic bent of mind as a poet-mystic, he is specially susceptible even to the physical attractions of the Divine Enchanter, Kannan, whose sole artful design is to ravish the soul through every trace of fleshly feeling. It is in this context of poetic philosophy that the bridal mysticism of Nammaazhvaar with his mystic instinct for the resceptivity, responsivenss and mutualness of feminine love is to be understood and it is distinguishable from the merely poetic or philosophic experiences of either mystics. The woes and agonies of separaton desecribed in *Tiruvaaymoghi* and *Tiruviruttam* are unmatched in mystic literature for their moving power.

To conclude, the bridal mysticism is thus a mentalprocess which transports the mystics of either sex to a plane above the physical one, where the feminine features of enthusiastic surrender and passivity dominate without reference, however,

20. TVM 5.5; 5.9; 6.1; 6.5; 6.7; 7.2; 7.3; 8.9; 9.7.
21. ibid 8.2; 1, 4, 6.

to the eternal features of the female sex. Love for God is akin to the love which a woman has for her choice among men *(purusha)* with the shift of accent to *purushottama*. *Purushas* are many and so each has a beloved, but *purushottama* is only one and it is but natural that others, who are different from Him, should be His beloveds. Carnality is not completely overcome in conjugal bliss at the human level while it finds no place in divine love. Therefore both men and women are divested of their awareness of their bodily features denoting sex and have only feminine tendencies as far as love is concerned. Single centredness in love, pining away in the absence of the husband, intensive emotional feeling and silent resignation to the circumstantial powers mark out feminine love of a woman and in the higher degree determine the love of God. There is rather nothing like love of manly nature. There is passion of the overbearing type accompanied by resoluteness and violence to bring everything under subjection and this is the masculine trait of love which lacks emotional feeling. Devotion is emotional and also must be treated as feminine. It is therefore that through this aspect of mysticism that a poet-devotee finds better scope to give vent to his feelings of passion and love for God than in the prosaic form of Poetry.

7. THE VALUE OF WEEPING IN SPIRITUAL LIFE*

WEEPING is one of the methods invariably resorted to by the weak and the impotent for the attainment of their heart's desire. Weeping excites sympathy, disarms opposition and goes a long way in securing the desired object from the hands of the unwilling giver. It is also designed by nature to lindicate pain and the existence of sufferiug. Instinctively a man in distress weeps, and it is only by the greatest restaint imposed on oneself on considerations of the vulgarity involved in the exhibition of emotions, that weepIng is stifled where the individuality is strong and unbending. Weeping also comes as a solace to the man in desperate circumstances. He finds a relief in shedding tears and sobbing away his woes. He takes to weeping instinctiveley as it were. In his overstrung state it suggests itself as a relief and remedy. No wonder then that the seekers after God also weep and wail a great deal. They feel incomplete without God Who is the Object of their love; they feel desolate and forlorn when they think that they have been abandoned by their God in a wilderness of suffering and sorrow; they feel further that they are deeply distressed at their helpless plight; they are daily in mortal dread of the temptations and allurements of the material world which threaten to drag them away from their spiritual path. Experiencing all these and seeing by intros-

* Paper presented to All - India Oriental Conference, 29th Session, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune, May, 1978.

pection several other kindred sensations of fear and insecurity they wring out their hearts in grief and break out into rhapsodies of melancholic strain which are as beautiful in their melody as they are striking in their disconsolateness. The songs and hymns of the devout men of yore are nothing but a musical record of the wailing of their souls in their fulness of their longing and the poigrancy of their yearning for a God Whom they loved, worshipped and sought after. Intense dissatisfacion at their present state, and a keen aspiration to true spiritual greatness shook these devotees to the very foundation of their beings and the result is a series of sobbing songs sung out of sheer agony of the soul.

It is matter of common knowledge that only the materially minded and sordid man-of-the-world, who does not feel the existence of a spirit behind and beyond the matter that meets the eye, that can be satisfied with his present state, and be content with mere animal existence. He may be troubled by unfulfilled desires and thwarted ambitions in material life, but he is not worried by spiritual wants and longings of which he knows nothing. On the other hand, there are a few others who out of their faith in God have made it their pleasure to love Him, their duty to do His behest, and their purpose to reach Him. These men of God are not satisfied with their present lot; nor are they content with their present existence. Their noble soul clamours for a beatific union or coalescing unity with God, and they will know no sat isfaction, nor find any comfort, till they attain their ultimate goal, God. It is these disappointed devotees, and disquieted seekers that have specialied in the art of weeping, and they have left to us a large legacy of laments, portrayidg their divine discontent. The loudness of their lament is in direct proportion to the intensity of tdeir longing that prompts us to weep. If one feels like a fish out of water, one is sure to writhe in agony till one is thrown back into the water, or till one dies. If one seels only lukewarm in one's desolation, then one simply moans in a low tone

about one's woes. In the course of a maa's spiritual progress, a certain amount of sickmindedness is a necessary stage. A dispassionate contemplation of the futility of the human endeavour is an absclute pre-requisite for spiritua stability. In other words, as soon as a discriminating self-analysis of une's ways of life disclose to one what one really is and has been, and what one really ought to be, a sense of remorse is an invariable sensation that results out of the introspection. This feeling of remorse causes the first weeping. When one takes stock of ode's past life, nothing is left to one but to exclalm: "Oomanaar kanta kanavilum pazhutaay ozhitana kazhinta annaatkal"[1]-'the days that are past have gone away like the dreams of a dumb man, useless and unexpressed'. Like the water that has flown down a river, those days are no more to be, and there is no possibility of redeeming them from the lap of the past. This feeling of the lost chances is so bitter that Poykaiyaazhvaar cries out: 'I wept in sheer dread that all the several days that are past have been spent to no purpose'—"pazhute palakaalum poyina enru anci azhuten"[2]. Nammaazhvaar regrets that he has wasted all his past days without any feeling for God[3]. After one has wept out this feeling and risen chastened out of it, one makes a big effort to be pure in future, and to learn to pine for God Whom one has so long forgotten. Here again the feeling of one's smallness and His greatness may oppress and depress one. Here is the second lament, on the unworthiness of the individual soul laden with past sins and full of potentiality for future sins to realise the pure and blemishless God. The failure to qualify for true spiritual greatness in the past was the first cause for grief; the incapacity to qualify for it in the present is the second cause, and perhaps a more disquieting one. This feeling is also in turn wept out. Wide reading and deep reflection on the Lord's abounding *saulabhya* (accessibility) and abiding Grace, dispel all fears born out of inequality, and it is realised that with all His greatness, God

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1. *Peri-Tm* - 1. 1: 3 2 Mu. Tv. - 16 3. P. Tv. - 82

is not quite approachable. As Nammazhvaar says: "pattutai atiyavarkku eliyavan"[4]—'He is always amenable to love or *bhakti* of His devotees'. The stages in the growth of love in the case of Nammaazhaavaar are traceable in his work *Tiruvaaymozhi*. In the same work one can see how the venerable saint wailed and wept throughout the thousand verses with emotion and fervour.

Nammaazhvaar's songs especially those of the *Tiruvaaymozhi* are the best example of this cult of weeping as a method of God attainment. The Aazhvaar says in a verse: "cetiyaar aakkai atiyaaraic certal teerkkum tirumaalai,atiyen kaanpaan alarruvan"[5]—'He that can redeem me from mortality characteristic of the jungle of *samsara*, Him I would bewail for to enjoy *darsan* of; in another verse he cries' "koovik koovik kotuvinait toorrul ninra, paaviyen palakaalam vazhi tikaittu alamarkinren"[6]—'Embroiled as I am in the inextricable tangle of *samsaara* for long years without knowing how to extricate myself, I shout and shout for redemption'. In another place his God-hunger finds expression thus: "Thou art my very life; Thou art the very precious nector; Thou hast enslaved me; Thou that hast Garuda for Thy chariot and the resplendent discus for Thy weapon; Thou, most handsome of visage, I am a sinner; I yearn with a poignant heart in my appeal to Thee, but it has not been given to me to enjoy the experience of Thy *darsan*"[7]; in another verse of the same hymn he pathetically exclaims: "How long can I mourn interminably? Thou hast uprooted the twin *maruta* trees by the mere act of Thy crawling between them. My great Lord, mine is the longing to enjoy the *darsan* of Thy Feet. In my utter futility I became woe-begone and through my garland of verses I still make appeal to Thee"[8]. In the attitude of confession of sins the Aazhvaar prays for divine presence:

4. TVM - 1. 3 : 1
5. ibid 1. 5 : 7
6. ibid 3. 2 : 9
7. ibid 3. 8 : 7
8. ibid 3. 8 : 10.

"Taavi vaivam konta
entaay taamotara enruenru
Koovik koovi nencurukik
kanpani cora ninraal
Paavini enruonru collaay
paaviyen kaana vante"[9]

—'Thy Feet covered the whole world in conquest; Thou shrank into a meek being for cords! In this way I shout for long. My heart melts, my eyes overflow. I may be a sinner. But if Thou appeared before me to condemn me even as a sinner I can enjoy Thy divine presence'. In another place the saint cries: "Great God, Thou hast installed Thyself at *Kutantai* (Kumbakonam) for worshippers of my calibre. My lot has been to look up the heavens to enjoy Thy divine *darsan*. I cry hoarse and I worship Thee. In my ecstasy I trepidate; I put down my head in shame, sinner as I am. Though I am most losthsome I sing Thy praises"[10]. Here is the struggle of the Aazhvaar as Naayaki; the struggle has found expression in the words of the maid-companion: "At first sight the Aazhvaar-naayaki talks of the beautiful white conch and blazing discus; and of the lotus-eyes of the Lord. Her eyes overflow and she stands breathless and speechless"[11]; "she stands petrified. As soon as she hears the holy name of '*tevapiraan*', she softens herself, her lips seem to utter, betimes her eyes overflow"[12]; "she is in a divine trance; she mutters the *vyuha* state of the Lord in the milky ocean, of the three strides of the Lord to conquer the world, and of His role as a cowherd"[13]; "all her utterances are inclined towards the blue-complexioned Lord Kannapiraan. Her coyness has given place to an inward joy and an inner ectasy"[14]. The Aazhnaar calls loudly in words that could possibly melt away the hearts even of listeners. In a verse he pathetically cries: "Taavi vaiyam knota tatam taamaraikke

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9. Ibid 4. 7 : 3
10. ibid 5. 8 : 4, 5
11. ibid 6. 5 : 1
12. ibid 6. 5 : 2
13. ibid 6. 5 : 3
14. ibid 6. 5 : 4

kuoovikkollum kaalam innam kurukaato"[15]—'The God's handsome but gigantic Feet have subjugated the world. When will it be given to me to repose in Them?' The Aazhvaar-naayaki says: "He has enjoyed me to describe Him by the names of Maal, Hari, Naaranan, Maatavan, Govindan, Vaikuntan; but He never once cared to show Himself up or even to give a semblance of His coming'"[16]. The intensity of his feeling of woe reaches its peak in one *tiruvaaymozhi*. Having failed in all His appeals and utterances to have a glimpse of the beauty of the Lord's Auspicious Form, despair leads to despondency, and the Aazhvaar comes to the end of his tether. He has deeply yearned to have his *darsan* in full, His handsome appearance, His vision like the clouds, His majesty like the rising sun, all these have been great expectations: "Alas; I met my bitterest disappointment; I am on the point of frustration. Will it end in my death?"[17] Finally the god-enveloping love was vouchafed to the Aazhvaar. Such is the potency of weeping for God that a small child under a tamarind tree at Aazhvaar-tirunakari was able to outgrow in love the big Brahman by the sheer strength of his loud lamenations in the ecstasy of an unfulfilled love felt for the lotus Feet of the Lord, Who was made to feel that even a remote Paramapada is not secure from the reach of the loud notes of a languishing and agonising soul below pining away in love and crying aloud for the fulfilment of that love. Maanikkavaacakar has won the distinctive title of "Azhutu Azhutu Atiyatainta Anpan'[18]-'One who reached God by the strength of his weeping'. This noble saint has prescribed weeping as a means for attaining God"-azhutaal unnaip peralaame"[19]-'I can attain Thee, if wept'.

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15. ibid 6. 9 : 3
16. ibid 8. 2 : 7
17. ibid 8. 5
18. *ParancotiyarTiruvilaiyaatal* : Maturaik-kaantam - 21
19. Tvc - 94

8. VAISHNAVITE PHILOSOPHY FROM TAMIL SOURCES★

VAISHNAVISM is as old as *Saivism*, or for that matter Hinduism, and it has been extolled through the ages as the religion of redemption. It connotes the religion in which Vishnu, the eternally pure and perfect, enters into the history of humanity with a view to redeeming the bound self from sinfulness and selfishness and *vaishnavise* its nature. *Sri Vaishnavism* makes the meaning more clear and explicit by defining the duel function of Vishnu as *Sriyahpati* which consists in universal redemption. While *Visistaadvaida* as a philosophy defines Brahman as Godhead that creates, sustains, and destroys the universe with a view to brahmanising the finite self, Vaishnavism, in its religious aspect, identifies the same Godhead as unity in trinity with Vishnu who pervades all *jeevas* and *vaishnavises* their nature. Theology is, as it were, based on mere faith which takes divine disclosure of truth as never failing and hence does not provide scope for the exercise of free reasoning. Revelation is admitted of unquestioned authority. On the other hand, philosophical enquiry affords room for a critical examination of all facts and begins questioning even the authority of revelation. The *Vaishnavite* school brings out a reconciliation between the two, Here revelation can be examined critically but could not be discarded.

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The philosophy of *Vaishnavism* can be expressed in *Tattva* (reality), *Hita* (means), and *Purushaartha* (ends or goal of human endevour). *Tattvas* are three viz *Cit* or *Cetana* (sentient being), *Acit* or *Acetana* (non-sentient things) and *Isvara* (God, the Inner controller of all beings). *Hita* consists of *bhakti* (devotion) and *prapatti* (self-surrender). *Purusharttha* (the ultimate goal of human endevour) is the attainment of *moksha* or *mukti* (emancipation) by the individual and getting the mystic experience of Brahman (universal Self). An attempt is made to explain these principles from Tamil sources and this paper is restricted to (i) *Naalaaylra Divya Prabandham*, (ii) *Tattva-traya* (iii) *Mumukshup-pati*, (iv) *Sri Vasana Bhooshanam* and (v) R*ahvsya-traya · saara*. The first mentioned work is in Tamil and the other four are in the *manipravaala* style.

1. THE TATTVAS

Cit: The sentient being, known as *Cit* in *Vaishnavite* philosophy, is referred to by the terms, 'spirit' 'soul' and '*aatman*'. When the word '*aatman*' connotes the finite self or the individual soul, it refers to it as distinct from the body (*deeha*), the sense-organs (*indiriyaas*), mind (*manas*), and the vital breath (*praana*). "By adopting the *Sankhyan* psychology, *Visistaadvaita* defines *aatman* negatively as *purusha* different from the twenty-four categories of *prakrti*. The latter is composed of the five gross elements (*bhootas*), the five subtle elements (*tanmaatras*), the five cognitive sense organs, the five conative sense organs, *manas*, *bhuddhi*, *ahankaara* and primal *prakrti*. *Purusha* is the twenty - fifth category".[1] Nammaazhvaar realises the nature of *aatman* by the grace of the Lord and describes it in one verse of *Tiruvaaymozhi*: "The soul is eternal, and essentially characterised by intelligence (*jnaana*); the soul which the Lord has condescended to exhibit to me as His mode, or related to Him as the *predicate* is to the *subject*, or *attribute* to *substance*; the soul which cannot be

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1. Srinivasachari, P.N. *The Philosophy of Visistaadvaita* p. 283 cf. *TVM*. 10.7:10 and *Tatvatrya* Sut. 87.

classified under any category as *this* or *that;* the soul the nature of which is beyond the comprehension of even the enlightened; the soul whose apperception by the strenuous mental effort called *yoga* (psychic meditation) is even not comparable to such perception or direct proof as arising from the senses conveying the knowledge of the external world; the soul (as revealed to me by the Lord) transcending all other categories of things, which could be grouped as 'body' or as 'senses' or as vital spirit (*praana*), or as 'the mind' (*manas*), or as 'the will' (*bhuddhi*), because destitute of the modifications and corruptions to which all these are subject, the soul, which is very subtle and distinct from any of these, neither coming under the description 'good' nor 'bad'."[2] In brief, the soul is an entity which does not fall under the cognizance of sense-knowledge. A close following of the commentary '*Itu*' will throw more light on the subject.[3]

Realising fully well what has been said above, the Aazhvaars do not treat the nature of the soul or the classification of the souls as *nitya*, *mukta* and *bhadda*.[4] However, they are aware of the nature of the selves which could be brought under these categories. Those who are eternal and so do not have to undergo any of the sufferings due to bondage, have a clear conception of their own essential nature, their relationship to the Lord and their being subordinated to the supreme person.[5] Garuda, Aadisesha, Vishvaksena and others fall under the category of *nityas* (Eternals). The souls live only in Sri Vaikuntha and dedicate themselves to the service of the Lord consistent with the work allotted to them. The second category of the souls, *muktas* (released souls), are those who are emancipated after they leave the worldly bondage through God's grace and enjoy rendering service to the Lord in Sri Vaikuntha[6]. The bound *jeevas* (*bhaddha*) are those who suffer the worldly ills[7]. Due to beginningless

2. TVM 8.8:5
3. Vide *Ittin Tamizhaakkam* —TVM. 8.8:5; cf. *Tattvatrya*-4.
4. *Tattva-traya* Sut 42-45.
5. ibid - Sut. 45
6. ibid - Sut. 44
7. ibid - Sut. 43

karma, they have their essential nature concealed with the result that they have individually diverse strands of knowledge potency and other attributes. They could not have perfect knowledge of themselves nor can they have a uniform realization of God. They include Brama, Rudra, Indra and other denizens of heaven, sages and ordinary men.

The noumenal self or *aatman* as *purusha* is free and eternal, but somehow "it gets phenomenalised, becomes bound to *prakrti* and is caught up in the causal necessity of *karma*". Each act of *karma* leaves behind an impression or mark on the mind. The successive actions of similar type deepen the imprssions which assume the form of inherent inclination or predilection. The moral experiences of the good and bad deeds are ultimately traceable to the responsibility of the empirical self. If the *aatman* falsely identifies itself with *prakrti* and its *gunas*, it becomes a sensitive self or the product of nature; it is phenomenalised and subjects itself to the external determinations of sense inclinations and becomes a slave of desire. But if it exercises its moral freedom, it realises its noumenal nature as a spiritual being and attains self-mastery and autonomy. The self can become a dog or a god with its immense potentialities, and no being on earth or beyond can destroy its consciousness. Merits (*nal-vinai)* and demerits (*tee-vinai*), according to the Aazhvaars, are chains that fetter the self, though the former is of gold and the latter is that of iron. Good and evil are therefore relative as they are linked by causal necessity. They subject the self to the adventures of numberless births and deaths and so the self is caught up in the see-saw of *samsaara*, As the sower of the seeds alone is answerable for the harvest, man harvests the type of fruits according as the type of the seeds he sows.

No doubt God is good, and therefore the existence of evil and other imperfections has to be traced to the freedom

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8. *The Philosophy of Visistaadvaita*-p. 3II.

of the finite self. Moral freedom is a real choice between different possible courses of action, and the *jeeva* is responsible for the choice of evil; and God is responsible not for the choice between good and evil, but for the pleasures and pains that follow the deed. The existence of evil in the divine plan is only a bare possibility, but it is the self that makes the possible actual and enjoys the fruits of *karma*. Pleasure and pain are determined by the nature of *karma*, and they vary with different persons at different times. Nothing, *Cit* or *Acit*, is intrinsically good or bad, pleasant or painful, and the hedonistic value of a thing is relative to the moral differcnees caused by *karma*.[9] According to Paraacara Pattar even a disease could be a teacher for us, as it would create a repentence in our mind. Koorattaazhvaan the disciple of Raamaanuja on losing his eye-sight did not long for his eyes again, as they would make him look at the object of sense-pleasures.[10]

Isvara is always eager to confer *moksha* on those who seek His protection. Sometimes His grace is in the form of punishment. The sufferings of selves are therefore intended only to reveal, to some, their offences with their consequences and then conceal them in order to create utter disgust, disgust like that of Tirumankaiyaazhvaar who says : "My mind cannot bear the thought of living in a house in the roof of which there is a serpent",[11] so that thereby they too, might long for the release from *samsaara* which Isvara has already made up his mind to confer *moksha* on them. So emancipation is a combined process of *gracia operans* and *gracia co-operans*. In such contexts, the aspect of the experience of sorrow or pain is the fruit of evil deeds in the past. Among these, some punishments are the früit of certain good deeds in the past which have begun to operate (*prarabdha*). When the crow (kaakaasüra) fell at Sri Raama's feet praying for

9. *Srī Bhaasva* 3.2:12
10. Somewhat as Milten reconciled himself to his blindness,
11. *Periya-Tm* 11.8:3

life, the Lord gave him his life; the fruit of his *prapatti* was full and complete. Even the punishment inflicted on this wicked crow whereby he lost sight of one eye was not really of the nature of punishment. It was, as it were, a special form of favour, because it would prevent him from doing evil again.[12]

The individual soul is stated as being dear to the Lord of Lakshmi even like *Kaustubha;* he can be called the prince, the Lord's son, His disciple, His attendent, His dependent existing solely for Him *(sesha)* and His servant. It is by His gracious desire that all souls should enjoy His blissful state and attain their goal. The individual self therefore, by its essential nature, is entitled to the service of his master as his birth right as Eternals themselves. But sunk in the sleep of beginningless *maaya*, he has fallen into the wilderness of matter, has had repeated births in quick sucession, has lost the primary aim of existence, has found no comfort or consolation, has lost the splendour of his real nature owing to evil desires and passions and finally attains immortality by realizing his true nature and purpose. The condition of the *jeeva* in *samsaara* has been aptly described by Raamaanuja and Vedaanta Desika by the parable of the young prince who in a boyish way strays away from his royal father, enters the huts of wild tribes and identifies himself with them.[13] But a trustworthy friend weans him away from his wicked surroundings by reminding him of his royal destiny and succeeds in reclaiming him. The father who was searching for his lost son is very happy and overjoyed to meet him, and the two are at once reunited in love. Similar is the state of *jeeva*, who belongs to Brahman and who identifies himself with the body, loses his real character and assumes a different nature. He sleeps in and as matter in the *pralaya* state and subjects himself to the wheel of *samsaara* with all its hazards and harships and till he is made to realise his folly by a loving *guru*. He at ast retraces his steps, regains his self knowledge, is freed

12. *Periya-Tm.* 3.10:6.

13. *Sri Bhaashya* 2.1:4; R.T.S. Chap I

from the fetters of *karma*, and enters his home in the Absolute. The freed self withdraws itself for ever from the twenty-four *tattvas* of *prakrti* in the same way in which it entered into them and became practically a mode of matter. Being Brahman he becomes Brahman.

Acit : Non-sentient things, known also as *Acetana* is often referred to in philosophy as *Acit*. In western philosophy it is known as nature. Nature not only is but also becomes and the process of nature is everchanging - *parinaamic*-and is so made as to adapt itself spiritual progress of the *jeeva* and the plan or purpose of creation is the perfection of the *jeeva* as an *amsa* or part of Brahman. "Though the philosophy of nature or *prakrti* is not so important as that of the spirit or *aatman* it furnishes a corrective to the subjective tendencies of mysticism as a personal intuitive experience. It is a matter of common knowledge that science studies in a disinterested way a particular province of reality and has a piecemeal view thereof. But philosophy reflects on nature as a connected whole; and, as the cosmology of religion, it enquires into the nature of God as the ground of all beings. Nature is the world of space-time-cause and it is governed by the law of uniformity and unity. God is in nature, but is not nature. Nature is external to the finite self, but not to God. Nature and the Self are eternal, but neither is derived from the other nor created by it. Though they are eternally distinct, they are not external to God who is their ground and mystic goal. The cosmological problem is the three-fold problem of philosophy relating to nature, self and God. It is by the will of *Isvara* that nature changes and the self progresses, and it is by knowing Him as the inner self of all beings that all beings are known. Brahman is the ultimate meaning of the universe and the philosophy of nature and that of the self have their foundations only in the *Vedaantic* knowledge of Brahman. It may be said that creation is the self-limitation of God in the interest of soul-making. Nature is the theatre of the Divine *leela* of Love and the Lord wears the garment of nature and

plays with the finite self till the two are united."[14] It has already been mentioned that *Acit* is made up of twenty-four categories.[15]

Nature's exhilerating and exuberant charm is such that it more often arouses and inflames the sensuous appetite of the selves. The souls which have taken up a physical body due to the effects of the past deeds become much impassioned by the impact of the alluring aspects of Nature under the most tempting circumstances. Nature which Yaamuna describes a *maaya* and Raamaanuja as obscuring the nature of God, takes a powerful hold on such occasions on men with very exceptions. To this class of exceptions belong the religious-minded persons, who, affected by intense delectability, find, beneath the sensuousness of such sights, visions of God who is the ultimate basis of such fascinating environments. The religious background, which is furnished by the recitation of the *Vedas*, the performance of the ritualistic acts and such other functions, evokes the emotions of the Aazhvaars, with the result that they wax eloquent over the attractive features of the shrine and the presiding deity there. Mystic experience which is the specific feature of the life of devotion of the Aazhvaars is better revealed in their ecstatic presentation of the temples situated in such surroundings. The hymns of *Naalaayiram* abound in the descriptions of Nature, its mountains, rivers and cities these Aazhvaar saints had visited. These places are held to be equally holy and divine as the temples where the Lord has chosen to be present as *arcaa*. It is therefore tantamount to saying that the description of Nature is one way of describing the Lord Himself.

Isvara: The third *tattva* is Isvara. *Sri Vaishnavite* theism equates God-head with the dual self of Lakshmi-Naaraayana

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14. Subbu Reddiar, N: *Religion and Philosophy of Nalaayira Divya Prabandham with Special Referenee to Nammaalvaar* (S.V.University, Tirupati 2) pp 419-20

15. *Tattvatrya*-Sut 67.

or Sriyah-pati. The *Vaishnavite Aagamas* describe Him as being always with Lakshmi who Herself is designated as *Vishnu-sakti*. The two-fold spiritual form of Brahman as Lord and Sri is philosophically inseparable and functionally distinguishable. The cosmic ruler is ruled by love, and Lakshhmi resides in the ever-blooming lotus of love and is the heart of the divine nature. Naammaazhvaar speaks of this concept of dual self as 'Harbouring Lakshhmi with gazelle-like eyes in Your bosom'— "maan ey nokki mata vaalai maarpil kontaay"[16], the One on whose bosom sits the Goddess of the lotus flower'—"allimaatar amarum tirumaar-pinan"[17] etc. The word *'tirumaal'* meaning 'Naaraayana with Lakshmi' occurs in a number of places in the Aazhvaars' hymns. The Lord rules the world by His relentless law of *karma* and his holy wrath against the evil doer is inescapable, but the rigour of *karma* is overpowered by the redemptive love of *krpa*. Evil is destroyed and the evil-doer saved. As the Lord rules by law and *Sri* rules by love, the love of law and he law of love are so vitally interwined in the divine nature- as to render nugatory any attempt at the philosophic analysis of the exact nature. The majesty of the holy law of justice is eternally wedded to the all conquerring might of mercy.[18] *Sriyahpati* as Lord and *Sri* as a second self constitute a kind of one in two and two in one and their cooperative identity is indispensable to the seeker of salvtion. The concept of *Sriyahpati* therefore recognises the fundamental truth of ethical religion, that the holiness of law is ever wedded to the forgiveness of love. Each acts and reacts on the other, and in their interaction lie the stability of the social and moral order and the salvability of the sinner.

References to the five - fold forms of God in the Tamil works are innumerable. While giving their experience of such forms of God, the Tamil seers do not forget that the formless and the Cosmic Person becomes possessed of form

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16. TVM-1.5:5 17. ibid 9.10:10
18. Teci. Pm.-85

and frequently refer to this.[19] The transcendental state *para* which is the highest form is expressed in such terms as Naaraayuna, Parabrahman and Para-Vaasudevan. This is the self-realised absolute having the super-essential qualities of *satyam* (truth), *jnaanam* (light) *anantam* (infinity), *amalam* (goodness), and *aanandam* (bliss). He is the Eternal of eternals which is formless, changeless and transcendental. He lives in the city called Vaikuntha in Parmapada where "matter exists without its mutability, time exists as eternity, and the *mukta* lives without the moral limitations of *karma*".[20] Nammaazhvaar refers to God in this form : 'the permanently great and the first and foremost of the eternals[21]; 'the Lord reclined on the bed of five - mouthed snake''[22]; 'the foremost of the heavenly who wields the sword, the mace, the conch, the discus and the bow'[23] etc.

The second form of God is in the *vyuha* state (grouped form) where Brahman the absolute becomes Isvara the God-head who is the ground of the universe as its creator, pre-server and destroyer. The metaphysical absolute becomes Vaasudeva, the perfect, to satisfy the meditational needs of the *mumookshu* and for the creation of the universe. He manifests as Sankarshana with the two qualities of *jnaana* (knowledge) and *bala* (strength), as Pradyamna with the two qualities of *aisvarya* (lordship) and *veerya* (virility) and Ani-rudda with the two qualities of *sakti* (potency) and *tejas* (splendour) without any dimunition of Divinity. This, how-ever, does not mean that each *vyuha* has only its two respec-tive qualities but each *vyuha* is Visnu Himself with *six* qualities of which *two* only in each case become manifest. The *Vyuha* Vaasudeva is the same as the transcendent form of the Lord and replete with all the *six* qualities.[24] The other three are

19. Periya-Tm-5.6:5.
20. *The Philosophy of Visistaadvaita*-p. 154.
21. TVM-1.9:4
22. ibid 2.1:5
23. ibid 7.2:6
24. *Yatindra Deepika* Ix 19; cf *Lakshmitantra* 6:25
25. *Introduction to the Paancaratra* - pp. 37-39

named after the elder brother, the son, and the grand-son respectively of *Krishna*. There is a distinctive function assigned to each of these *vyuhas* in cosmic creation as well as In the act of redeeming the souls.[25] There are a number of verses in *Tiruvaaymozhi* referring to the involutionary and evolutionary processes of the Universe wrought by the Lord. These processes explain or rather illustrate the creation of the world and the redemption of the souls.

Each one of these four *vyuhas* descend into three sub-*vyuhas*. Vaasudeva hypostatizes into Kesava, Naaraayana and Madhava; Sankarshana into Govinda, Vishnu and Madhusoodana; Pradyumna into Tirivikrama, Vaamana and Sridhara; and Anirudda into Hrshikesa, Padmanaabha and Daamodara. These twelve tutelary deities are the presiding deities of the sun in the twelve months of the year. The names of these twelve deities are recited by the pious Hindus every day. There is a hymn by Nammaazhvaar which goes by the name of *Panniru-tirunaamap-paattu*.[26] the recitation of which leads us to the God's lotus feet. A hymn of Periyaazhvaar containing the advice to people to name their children with the names of the Lord bears some of thes names.[27] Another hymn celebrating the piercing of the lobes of the ears of child *Krishna* contains these names.[28] Yasoda addresses Him with the names in the hymn. Again the images of the Lord are distinguished to represent these twelve forms by varying the order and arrangement of the appurtenances held in the four hands of each image.

The third state of Brahman is *Vibhava* which is the descent of *Isvara* among beings by means of forms similar to that *genus*. "It is the embodiment of the redemptive working of the *rakshka* in the moral will of humanity with a view to recover it from its sinfulness."[29] "It is a periodic invasion of *krpa*

26. *TVM*. 27. 27. *Periyaal*-Tm-4,6
28. ibid 2.3
29. *The Philosophy of Visistaadvaita*-p. 156

into all species and into the history of the humanity when evil triumphs over goodness and creates a crisis in moral life".[30] in order to arrest the progress of social disruption, redeem the sinner from his sinfulness, and commune with the devotee who thirsts for His living presence.[31] The ten principal descents are the Fish, Tortoise, Boar, Man-Lion, Dwarf, Parasuraama, Raama, Bålaraama, Krishna and Kalkin each one for some purpose. Among the *avataaras* of the Lord, some get meagre and brief references in the hymns of the Aalzhvaars because of the short time of His stay in that form and particularly the smaller number of persons who alone were intended to be favoured by that form of the Lord. The *avataaras* Varaaha, Vaamana, Narasimha, Raama and Krishna have frequent references in the works of the Aazhvaars and the frequency of the last two is still greater, the reason perhaps being that these two took birth seemingly like ordinary mortals, lived with them for a longer period and had contacts in the day to day life whereas the other *avataaras* were for a specific purpose at particular periods and when the purpose was fulfilled they disappeared.

The fourth state, namely, the immanent form of God is the *antaryaamin*, the Indwelling Self in the region of the heart. The Lord in this form stays with the individual self as its friend in its states of experience such as heaven, hell etc and is perceptible only to *yogins*. The moral idea of *Isvara* taking this form is making the *jeevas* pulsate with their creative life and participate in their inner joy and for making the mortal selves immortal. Though He co-exists with the individual self, He is untouched by the taints inherent In the latter. There are a large number of references of this form in the hymns of the Aazhvaars. Probably according to Nammaa zhvaar the hills like Tirumalai and Tirumaaliruncolai, the noisy ocean and Vaikuntha haven been discarded as worthless (lit. straw) for His stay.[32]

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30. ibid. 31. Bh. G-4:7,8 32. P.Tv-68.

The fifth state of God is the permanent incarnation of *arcaa* worshipped in temples, houses, villages, towns, sacred places and hills. 'He assumes the form desired by His devotees'— "Tamarukantatu evvuruvam avvuruvam taane"[33] according to Poykaiyaazhvaar. The *Para* and *vyuha* forms of the Lord are beyond the reach of the denizens of this *terra firma*. All the living beings have not been gifted to live in times when the Lord chose to come down as *avataaras*; owing to lack of *jnaana* and *bhakti* they are not able to see the ever-present *antaryaamin* in them. Hence the only atlernative left to people is to resort to the *arcaa* form to satisfy the spiritual longings and aesthetic cravings. Pillailokacaaryvaar makes the following comparisons with the five forms of God; the attempt to comprehend the transcendent form is like getting water from the other world for quenching thirst; the *vyuha* form is like the legendary ocean of milk which is also not easy of access; the descended forms are like occasion al floods that inundate the country for a while, but do not last long;the immanent form is like subterranean water which is not readily available to a thirsty man although it is right underneath his feet; the *arcaa* is like the pool which remains stationary after occasional freshes pass away and from which anyone at any time could slake his thirst.[34] Idols are permanent incarnations, and reservoirs of redemptive mercy. "*Arcaa* is not the idealised projection of creative imagination touched by religious feeling nor the symbolic expression of the finite in the infinite"[35] It is but the descent of God Himself as the embodiment of His accessibility in the world of mortals. The infinite God enters into finite forms without the loss of infinity and *Isvaratva* for communing with the devotee that longs for His contact and for infinitising his religious consciousness. The Aazhvaars had a genius for intuiting the *arcaa*. They had a direct sight of Him. Their inspiring utterances serve to invite humanity to share in the mystic rapture of such divine communion. The alluring

33. Mu.Tu.-44
34. *Sri Vacana Bhashanam*-sut 39
35. *The Philosophy of Visistaadvaita*-p. 208.

beauty of Lord of Srirangam prompts Tiruppaanaazhvaar exclaim the eyes that have seen the Lord will refuse to see other things.[36] This may be the reason why the Aazhvaars have performed self-surrender to the *arcaa* form of the Lord which is the reservoir of divinity and redemptive mercy.

Sareera-sareeri bhaava : Isvara is called the Inner self or soul (*sareeri*) because as long as they exist, He is in regard to sentient beings and non-sentient substances, their support (*aadhara*), their controller or ruler (*niyanta*) and their Lord master (*scshi*) for Whose purposes they exist. Sentient beings and non—Sentient things form His body, since, with regard to Him, they stand as substances supported by Him, controlled by Him and existing solely for the fulfilment of His purposes throughout their existence. This relationship is known as *Sareeri-sareera bhaava*. The truth of Brahman as *Sareerin* of all beings is clearly intuited by Nammaazhvaar: "My Lord is one who in-forms all the objects and creatures that appear on the earth, on water, in the atmosphere, in fire and in the firm expanse of space and at once interpenetrates and transcends all these objects, internally and externally much like the soul informing the body".[37]

The hypstatic relation of the soul to God is clearly brought out in the line "atiyen ullaan utal ullaan"[38]—'He inheres in the soul and He inheres in the body. When the Aazhvaar uses the word '*atiyen*' elsewhere he means the body to be at the fore in the body-soul. For example in 'atiyen ceyyum vinnappam'[39] the word '*atiyen*' does not signify soul since the soul without body cannot make an appeal to the Lord. Similarly, 'atiyen ciriya jnaanattan'[40] the word '*atiyen*' does not stand for soul. The participation of the body is inevitable in the context for the phrase that follows the above is 'kaanpaan alarruvan'. So also in the verse preceding the

36. Ame.-10.
37 *TVM*-1.1:7
38. ibid 8.8-2
39. TVR-1
40 TVM-1.5-7

one under discussion.[41] But the verse under discussion for the reason that 'utal ullaan' meaning that 'He inheres in the body' follows 'atiyen ullaan', 'atiyen ullaan' specifically emphasises the soul, bringing out that the Lord inheres in the soul as well as in the body. But the nature of soul is described to be that which is intelligent (*jnaana*) and blissful (*aananda*). What characerises the souls is its relation of liege-ship (as creature) to God the Lord (as creator) = (*Sesatva*). The *seshatva* of the soul is established.

2. HITA

According to *Vaishnavism*, *Isvara* is the object of the knowledge which is the means, *upaaya*, and also the object of the goal which is attainment; He is the means as being the giver of the Grace, and likewise He is *upaaya* because Him-self the object that is to be reached. He is the ever-attained means (*Siddhopaaya*).[42] As auxiliary to this means there are two other means, namely, *bhakti* and *prapatti*. The former is mainly based upon *Upanishads* and its adoption is restricted to the higher castes; the latter is meant for all and its source is to be traced mainly to the *Vaishnavite Aagamas*. In the case of those who have adopted *prapatti* as the sole and independent means, *Isvara* takes the place of *upaayas*. In the case of others (i.e) those that adopt *bhakti*, *Isvara* whose favour has been won by *prapatti* (adopted as an auxiliary means to *bhakti*) intervenes and, standing in the place of rites and duties which are too hard for them in those situations which lie between the beginning of *karma-yoga* and the completion of the (prescribed) meditation, brings about the removal of sins and the manifestation of *sattva* which can result from their performance. He sees to it that meditation or worship which can be adopted as an *upaaya* is so complete as to bear fruit.

Bhakti : The course of devotion (*bhakti*) involves training in three stages known as *karma-yoga*, *jnaana-yoga* and *bhakti-yoga* in the progressive realization of *moksha*. These three

41. ibid 8.8:1

42. ibid 3.5:10; P.Tv.-46

stages constitute the to-be attained means (*saadhyopaaya*). The path of *karma* means the performance of certain kind of *karma* or rites and duties as a result of knowledge acquired from the *saastras* in regard to the true nature of self and the Universal Self. One should perform one's duties for the fulfilment of God's purpose; the person should do them subordinating his will completely and whole-heartedly to the divine will. The duties are done solely to please God. The path of knowledge is a stage of constant and uninterrupted contemplation, by one who has conquered his mind by *karma-yoga* of his essential nature or the self as being distinct from matter (the body, the senses and the like)—his *svarupa* which is the mode of *Isvara* in virtue of its relation to Him as His body. *Jnaana-yoga* is the path of contemplation, illumination and of self-renunciation leading to its positive sequel of self-realization. Contemplation is turning the outgoing mind within the help of *yogic* auxiliaries like *yama* (self-restraint), *niyama* (observation of rites) and *praana-yaama* (the control of the breath) and seeking the inner quiet. In this state all activity is swallowed up. The *yogin* can arrest the out-going tendency by thinking on thought itself, on contemplation on the nature of the *aatman*. *Bhakti-yoga* is the special form of meditation which is the nature of unsurpassed love and which has, for its object, the essential nature of form and qualities of Bhagavan Who is not dependent on anyone else, Who is not subject to the authority of anyone else, and Who does not exist for the fulfilment of the purpose for anyone else. It is a process in which the seeker after salvation sheds his egoism and ego-centric outlook, attunes himself to the will of God and yearns for eternal communion with Him. *Bhakti* is of the form of a continuous stream of knowledge which is of the nature of uninterrupted memory like the flow of oil streaming down continuously; it has clearness similar to that of visual perception; it goes from strength to strength by being practised every day until the day of journey to *Paramapada* and terminates in the remembrance of past moment. This *yoga* is the direct path to perfection as it leaes to the very heart of

religious consciousness which consists in shifting the centre of reference from *aatman* to *Paramaatman*. This stage effects a revolution in our life which is of far greater importance than the Copernican revolution. While the astronomer realizes the littleness of the earth and the greatness of the sun that draws it to itself, the religious man or devotee knows the emptiness of the earth-bound self and the saving might of God Who is the source and the centre of all living beings. The knowledge of the finite self has its religious fulfilment in the integral experience of the infinite which is its ground and goal. The self is merged in the Supreme Self like the sponge in the sea. Innumerable references are there in the hymns of Aazhvaars.[43] They have not been cited and discussed for want of space.

Prapatti : A simple way of reaching the ultimate goal is unqualified and absolute self-surrender, known as *prapatti*. It is the highest stage of God love. It stands in the place of *para-bhakti* to the man who adopts it as the direct and independent means. This way preserves the essentials of *bhakti*, dispenses with its predisposing causes or conditions and omits the non-essentials, like the need for ceaseless practice. It is thus a direct and independent means for salvation to those who do not belong to the three higher castes who are wanting in *jnaana* or ability or both and to those who cannot endure any delay in the attainment of *moksha* and are extremely impatient. Since it will be the means of securing all desired objects, it has been prescribed in the place of *para-bhakti* for those who know their limitations. The only requisite for this means is the change of heart or contrition on the part of the *mumookshu* and his absolute confidence in the saving Grace of the *Rakshaka*. The supreme merit of this means lies in the universality of its appeal to all castes and classes, including even the *jeevas* in the sub-buman bodies, the guarantee of salvation of all *jeevas* who cannot follow the arduous and precipitous path of *bhakti*, its intrinsic and independent value as means and naturalness and ease in secu-

43. *Religion and Philosophy of Naalaayira Divya Prabandham with Special Reference to Nammaazhvaar* pp 557-558; 589-590; 591-595.

ring immediate effect. The spiritual experience of the Tamil seers (Aazhvaars) is epitomized in the *Sarnaagati* of Nammaazhvaar who is extolled as the super-*prapnna* of *Sri Vaishnavism*. The classical and oft-quoted statement of this Aazhvaar who performs self-surrender to the Lord of Tirupati Hills is this: "Lakshmi has, abandoning Her abode of flowers, sought Her abode on Thy handsome bosom to abide in perpetuity, I, that have no stake in life, had entered the shelter of Thy Feet most appropriately to abide there for ever".[44] Almost all the Aazhvaars speak of their self-surrender to the Lord.

3. PURUSHAARTHA

The path to *mukti* or *moksha* is referred to as '*eel-kati*',[45] '*maak-kati*'[46] by the Aazhvaars. *Cel-kati* is the good path which a *jeeva* has to choose and *maak-kati* is *moksha*. These two concepts in combination may be interpreted to mean the straight and shining path of *arciraadigati* as mentioned in the *Chaandogya Upanishad*.[47] Tirumankaiyaazhvaar mentions this in his *Ciriya-tirumatal*[48] and elaborates it in his *Periya-tirumatal*.[49] The soul travels through the solar rays, reaches the sun, enters through the minute hole in the sun and then attains the place called *moksha* where, it is said, it enjoys the Lord. The making of a single *mukta* is a cosmic event, as it were, and even the celestials hail the entry of the finite self into infinity and sing hallalujahs in their owu celestial way. The glorious ascent of the soul has been graphically described by Nammaazhvaar.[50] The Aazhvaar is able to visualise the experience in anticipation, and to live in his imagination the wonderful experience, in vivid detail and in the graphic present, of the great welcome that will be accorded to Him in Heaven as he enters it. Nature celebrates the occasion by wearing a festiva garb; and the entire cosmos rejoices. The elements themselves such as the clouds and the oceans signify welcome to him. All the clouds roar giving peals of

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44. TVM - 6. 10 : 10
45. Moo. Tv. 95
46. Peri. Tm - 1. 1; 5, 8
47. Ch. Up. 4. 15 : 5
48. C. Tml: Kanni 7, 8
49. P. Tml. Kanni 16, 17
50. TVM. 10. 9.

thunder resembling the sound of the tabors announcing the auspicious occasion; all the seas dance in ecatasy at the emancipation of the soul of the Aazhvaar.[51] The *rishis* and the gods welcome and show him the way standing in rows in the sky.[52] The *kinnaras* and others sing and offer all honours; the celestial damsels sing the praises of the Aazhvaars.[53] The *Maaruts* and *Vasus* accompany him to regions beyond theirs and extol him.[54] All of them take him to the limits of the material world.[55] On the borders of Eternal realms, the Eternals bid him welcome and wash his feet with the ladies of moon-like faces offering him jars filled with holy waters (*poorna-kumpam*), treasures, fragrant powders and auspicious lamps.[56] Then he lives for ever with the Eternals enjoying eternal bliss.

The highest goal of man is *kainkarya* or consecrated service to God through self-negation; it is the highest spiritual experience. Nammaazhvaar refers to this service "antamil atimai"[57]—'endless service'; "vazhu ilaa atimai"[58] –'spotless service'; and "tontu"[59]—'service'. The last verses of *Tiruvaaymozhi* hymns give the results which will flow a recitation of the hymns. The opportunity to perform *kainkarya* is one among them as for example 'they will be able to do daily service to the Lord'[60] and 'they will for ever be pleased with the service of the Lord[61]. *Kainaryarasa* brings out the joy of selfless service. In attuning the naughted will to that of the *seshi*, the *mukta* feels that he is like a lute on which the supreme singer plays. Love is fulfilled in surrender and service; its cosmic value lies in attuning itself to the infinite. The *mukta* is immersed in the supreme and unsurpassable bliss of *Brahmaanubhava* without losing his self-being. It is a state of *saayujya* in which the unitive experience of bliss is present without the loss of slef-existence.[62]

51. ibid 10.9 : 1, 2
52. Ibid. 10. 9: 3, 4
53. ibid 10.9 : 5, 6
54. ibid 10.9 : 7
55. ibid 10.9 : 8
56. ibid 10 9 : 9,10
57. ibid 2.6 : 5
58. ibid 3.3 : 1
59. ibid 9.8:6; 10.4:9
60. ibid 6.5 : 11
61. ibid 8.9 : 11
62. R.T.S - chap. 22.

9. TIRUVALLUVAR'S PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE★

TIRUVALLUVAR was the best intellectual product of the ancient times. No other luminary of that age could come anywhere near him in profundity of wisdom, universal appeal and eternal validity. He represents the true Tamil spirit and is verily the Manu of the Tamil land. He must have codified what had developed independently as the ideals of the Tamilian way of life.

Parallel on the Dharmasastra Life-motif, Thiruvalluvar coined a trinity—the trinity of *Aram*, *Porul* and *Kaamam*. Those who would make Tiruvalluvar a borrower of Dharmasaastra motifs would equate these three with *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kaama*, and exlpain away Tiruvalluvar's omission of *Moksha* not really as an omission, but as an incorporation of the fourth motif within the three, or, as a natural outcome of the three ideally pursued. The four *Purushaarthas* had, no doubt, their Tamil parallel with *Veedu* added as the fourth corresponding to *Moksha*. Even if one should see the fourth *Purushaartha* impliedly covered by the *Kural*. one has to guard against perceiving total conceptual identity between the motifs of the *Kural* and those of the *Dharmasaastras* because, these concepts, in the *Dharmasaastras* connoted social stratification and exclusiveness on grounds of castes and colour, and were founded on the *Vedic* doctrines.

★ Bangalore Tamil Cankam; Thiruvalluvar 2010th Year Souvenir (January, 1979)

It should serve the limited purposes of our study, if we spelt out only a few of the differences between the *Dharmasa-astras* and the *Kural* in respect of these four fundamental *motifs*. *Dharma's* Tamil parallel *Aram* is not a mere translation from Sanskrit to Tamil, but has a pure Tamilian connotation. It does not have reference to the caste system, and its conciliation with the exotic philosophy, the reality of which he could not bypass in an age when such philosophy had gained near universal appeal. No doubt, the *Arattup-paal* begins with "*Katavul Vaazhthu*" (invocation to God) by way of satisfying literary conventions that had, long ago, developed. Besides, there is one more decad after *Katavul Vaazhthu* that seems to have reference to other-worldiness; excepting these twenty, the rest of the *Arattup-paal* is concerned with how life should be lived in the famlly and society. The moral element is founded on social life rather than on spiritual life, which does not, however, mean that spiritual growth has been discounted in the work. The *Kural* is concerned more with good and moral life on earth founded on good family life and human relations; and the goal of salvation is not held out as the prize of *Aram* by way of temptation or by way of a warning against a way of life not based on *Aram*. *Dharma* is more complicated and is very demanding in its application to the indivldual's life. Moreover, it distinguishes between individuals on the basis of caste. Its pursuit is much more than living the daily life correctly within the limitations of the environment. The *Aram* of the *Kural* emphasises individual and social values that have the direct application to life in family and society. Even in *Turavaraviyal* (the section on asceticism)the emphasis is on the social values. In short, the *Aram* of the *Kural* emphasises service to humanity as the equivalent of *tapas* or penance.

The *Porut-paal*, parallelling the *Purushaartha* of *Artha*, again, emphasises social qualities applicable to all individuals and has totally deviated from most of the *Arthasaastra* motifs which has reference mostly to the art of government. Though royalty is brought up in the *Porut-paal* and is ostensibly its

theme, it is not highly exalted royalty based on the dictum, "the king can do no wrong", but a royalty symbolizing the aspirations and virtues of the common man. All the virtues, supposed to applying to king in the three *Iyals—Arasiyal Angaviyal* and *Ozhipiyal*, barring those having technical references to government, are those applicable to the commoner. Only a few chapters in *Porut-paal* refer to the art of governance; and even these are shorn of any divine - right theory. It is remarkable that a whole section, the *Ozhipiyal*, is devoted to citizenship virtues and the dignity of labour.

Without trying to compare the *Porut-paal* with either *Maanavadharma* or Kautilya's *Arthasaasthra* in any detail, we may re-emphasise the position we have taken early, viz., that the secularism and social morality of the indigenous Tamils pervade the spirit of the *Porut - paal* which often tempts cursory readers into making it a Tamil version of the Sanskrit *Saastras*. Even at the risk of repetition, we may point out that the *Porul* or *Artha motif* may be Sanskritic suggestion, but how it is spelt out is entirely Tamilian.

The *Kaamattup-paal*, likewise, is a hundred percent Tamilian version though with a Sanskritic *Purushaartha* label, nobody need quarrel over the apparent identity in this as in the titles to earlier themes. *Aram* and *Porul*, because, as we have explained earlier, the pattern of presentation is that of Sanskritic *Saastras* but principles and ideas are mostly indigenous to the Tamil soil with due concessions for the aspects of the exotic system that could not be pushed out even from the unperceived enclaves of the Tamil traditionalists. While in the *Arattup-paal* and *Porut-paal* one could even attempt to sustain a perceptible percentage of Sanskritic influence by playing on apparent parallelisms, in the *Kaamattuppaal*. Tiruvalluvar has not only presented the concepts of married life uniquely Tamilian, but has, even if we may say so been guilty of speaking of an aspect of Tamilian marriage system that must have almost been supplanted by a system of marriage

inspired by the Aaryans. Even in the days of Tolkaappiyar, who, we may have every reason to believe, must have been earlier in point of time than Tiruvalluvar's *Kalavu* that had been in vogue from times immemorial gave place to *Karanam* for the reason that *Kalavu* degenerated into promiscuity which Tolkaapiyar refers to as *Poy* and *Vazhu.* The whole of *Kalaviyal* and *Karpiyal* in *Tirukkural* has reference to the indigenous system of marriage with all its pre-marital norms. *Kalavu* and *Karpu* are two of the unique concepts developed on the Tamil soil based on a system of marriage in which free love was permitted, and the marriage itself was solemnized as between two young persons deeply in love with one another not as between two strangers brought together in wedlock to iron out their temperamental differences later.

Though apparently Tiruvalluvar casts his ideas within the *Purushaartha* mould, using for all but one of the *Purushaarthas*, Tamil names, the philosophy of life derivable from the *Kural* is the philosophy reflected in the earlier classics and distinctly Tamilian. The Tamils rested on the philosophy of life as real, and worth iving, fully and well. The concepts developed related to how life on earth could be made worth living. Individual and social virtues making for individual self-development and social harmony were developed within the environment in which nature, with her irresistible charm, and bounties, inspired less of thoughts of death and another world, less peaceful than this one. The *Kural* is truly an innovation to the glorious past of the Tamils in which life had meaning and must be lived both for the individual's happiness and for social harmony.

Tiruvalluvar looks upon the ideal set-up of the family as the nucleus of an ideal society. Domestic life is the foundation of community life. The virtues of ahouse-holder are relevant in social context also. According to Tiruvalluvar a good house holder alone can be a good citizen. A major division of the *Aratup-paal* is *Illaraviyal* consisting of two hundred couplets all of which present the virtues of both the house

holder and the citizen. In *Turavaraviyal*, but for the chapters on *Tavam*, all chapters deal with social virtues. Even the chapter on *Tavam* is not an exposition on 'sack-clothes and ashes' and running away from the reality of social life, but one on self-restraint or self-discipline which has the highest degree of value to the common man.

The goals of life are : to serve, to love, to sacrifice, if nesessary,to like it well, and leave it with dignity and honour. The ambition of every individual should be to grow to his fullest stature to be able to leave foot-prints on the sands of time. When one reads the *Kural* deeply and carefully, one cannot escape the thought that Tiruvalluvar's ambition was to make a *Caantron* (சான்றோன்) of every individual. This *Caantron* concept is to be found in many a context in the *Puram* collections, and it is this that Tiruvalluvar spelt out in 1330 couplets.

10. VAISHNAVA PHILOSOPHY IN SOUTH INDIA★

VAISNAVA philosophy in South India is known as *Visishtaadvaitic Vaishnavism*. Vaishnavism connotes the religion in which Vishnu is the Godhead. Sri.Vaishnavism makes the meaning more clear and explicit by defining the dual function of Vishnu as *Sriyahpati*. While *Visishtaadvaita* defines Brahman as the Godhead that creates, sustains and destroys the universe, *Vaishnavism*, as its religious aspect, identifies the same Godhead as unity in trinity with Vishnu as the Supreme Person. Theology is based on mere faith which takes devine disclosure of truths as never failing and hence does not provide scope for the exercise of free reasoning. Revelation is admitted of unquestioned authority. On the other hand, philosophical enquiry affords room for a critical examtnation of all facts and begins questioning even the authority of revelation. The Vaishnava Philosophy of Raamaanuja, more prevalent in South India, recognises the claims of both faith and reason and brings out a reconciliation between the two by admitting a free play of reason. Here revelation can be critically examined. but could not be discarded.

The philosophy of *Vaishnavism* can be expressed in *Tattva* (reality), *Hita* (means) and *Purushaartha* (ends or the ultimate goal of human endeavour). *Tattvas* are three viz, *Cit* or *Cetana* (sentient beings), *Acit* or *Acetana* (non-sentient things) and

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★ Contribution to Dravidian Encyclopaedia (in three volumes)-History, Language and Culture.

Isvara (God). These three ultimate realities are known *Tattvatraya* (traya—three). *Hita* consists of *bhakti* (devotion) and *prapatti* (self-surrender). *Purushaartha* (the ultimate goal of human endeavour) is the attainment of *moksha* or *mukti* (emancipation) by the individual and getting the mystic experience of Brahman (Universal Self). Besides these there are three *mantras* (esoteric doctrines) that are the basis of *Sri Vaishnavism*.

THE TATTVAS

(1) *Cit* : It is *jeeva* or soul. It *is* knowledge and *has* knowledge. The soul as knowledge does not change; but as having knowledge it changes. Knowledge as an attribute is called *dharmabhoottha-jnaana* (attricutive intelligence); it characterizes both soul and God. As an attribute it is inseparable from them.

It is also a substance *(dravya)* in the sense that it is capable of contrition and expansion, and is the substrate of change. The soul is atomic but, since it has as its invariable accompaniment attributive knowledge which can stream forth any distance, it is able to apprehend things even though they be far off. The soul's attributive knowledge expands to its fullest extent in the state of release; there is nothing than that the soul cannot know. In the state of bondage, however, the soul's attributive knowledge is more or less contracted. The soul, in this condition, acquires the body that befits its past *karma*, and has to transmigrate from one life to another till it attains release. It is self-revealing, being of the essence of sentience, and knows no change except through changes in its attributive knowledge. It is different from God, but not independent of Him. It is described as *prakaara* (mode) of God, by which is meant that it is an accessory to Him, and not that it is a mode in the sense of being a transformation of Him. Like *Acit* it is coeval with God but not identical with Him. It is looked upon as God's "body" inas much as God is immanent in, acts upon and guides it from the inside. The souls are infinite in number; and, if unity is predicated

of them anywhere in the *Veda*, it is because all of them alike are of the nature sentience and therefore form one and the same class The souls are of three kinds. (i) the Eternals(*nitya-suris*) which have never been in bondage like Garuda Vishvaksena and others; (ii) the *Muktas* (freed souls) which have already achieved their salvation; and (iii) the *baddhas* (bound souls) which are caught up in the vortex of *samsaara*. The third type of souls wander from life to life and are still in the process of transmigration.

2. *Acit* : The non-sentient world, known also as *acetana* is often referred to as *acit*. It is the dwelling place of the soul, and, through them, of God also. *Prakrti* or matter has three qualities *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*; these three are taken to be its attributes and not its constituents. These three qualities appear at the time of creation of the world. When there is dissolution, matter is not lost, but it exists in subtle form. Nothing can come out of nothing. In the cause the effect is latent(*sat-karya*).Causation means*parinaamam*(transformation); it consists in making patent what is latent. Hence creation and dissolution are the appearance and disappearance, respectively, of matter and not the absolute origination and destruction.

Kaala or time which is also *Acit* is the form of all existence. As a coordinate of *prakrti*, it is comprised in *Brahman*. The temporal world equips the soul for its empirical career; it also serves as the means for making the soul progess towards its goal which is godliness.

3. *Isvara* (God) : Visishtaadvaita identifies God with Vishnu-Narayana who is the same as upanishadic *Brahman* endowed with the eternal attributes of truth, goodness, beauty and bliss. God is the immanent principle of *prakrti* as well as that of individual souls. The exact significance of representing them as His body is that they are sustained by Him are together subject to His control and entirely subserve His purposes. As Raamaanuja puts it God exists for Himself, while eventually matter and souls exist for His sake. The same

observation applies to the individual soul and its body also. In other words, God together with the souls and matter is an organic whole, just as the soul with its physical body is an organic unity. God like the individual soul, is of the essence of intelligence, self-revealing and knows objects through attributive knowledge. But unlike it He is free from all defects, and is possessed of six main qualities viz,*jnaana*(knowledge), *bala* (strength), *aisvarya* (soverignity), *veerya* (virility) *sakti* (potency), and *tejas* (splendour), besides innumerable auspicious qualities like *saulabhya souseelya, vaatsalya* and others. He is omnisicient, omnipotent and omnipresent. He is also all merciful; and it is through His grace that man attains salvation. He is the author of the Universe. Although God is the whole and sole cause of the world, He is not affected by the changes of the latter. God Himself does not change; the entities that are comprehended in Him and of which He is the inspiring principle it is they that change. God is immanent in the world and also transcendent of it. He is the supreme moral governor and world-redeemer. He incarnates Himself out of His own will from time to time in order to recover the lost souls.

Five Porms of God: The Supreme Person (God) presents Himself in five forms known as *para* (transcendent), *vyuha* (the grouped) *vibhava* (the incarnated), *antaryaamin* (the immanent and *arca* (the idol). The transcendental state is the highest form. It is expressed in such terms as Naraayaana, Parabrahman and Para-Vaasudeva. This is the self-realised absolute having the super-essential qualities of *satyam* (truth), *jnaanam* (light), *anantam* (infinity), *amalam* (goodness) and *aanandam* (bliss). He is the Eternal of Eternals (*nitya-suris*) which is formless, changeless and trasncendental. He lives in the city called Vaikuntha in Paramapada where "matter exists without its mutabilty, time exists as eternity, and the *mukta* (the released self) lives without the moral limitations of *karma*".

The second form of God is in the *vyuha* state where Brahman the absolute becomes Isvara the God-head. The meta

phyical absolute becomes Vaasudeva, the perfect, to satisfy the meditational needs of the *mumukshu* (the seeker after salvation) and for the creation of the universe. He manifests as Sankarshana with the two qualities of *jnaana* (knowledge) and *bala* (strength) as Pradyumna with the two qualities of *aisvarya* (sovereignity) and *veerya* (virility) and Aniruddha with the two qualities of *sakti* (potency) and *tejas* (splendour) without any dimunition of Divinity. This, however, does not mean that each *vyuha* has only its two respective qualities, but each *vyuha* is Vishnu Himself with His six quaities of which two only in each case become manifest. The *vyuha* Vaasudeva is the same as the transcendent form of the Lord (para-Vaasudeva) and replete with all six qualities. The other three are named after the elder brolher, the son and the grandson respectively of *Krishna.* There is a distinctive function assigned to each of these *vyuhas* in cosmic creation as well as in the act of redeeming the souls.

Each one of these four *vyuhas* descend into three *sub-vyuhas.* Vasudeva hypostatizes into Kesava, Narayana and Madhava;Sankarshna into Govinda. Vishnu and Madhusueana Pradyuna into Tirivikrama, Vamana and Sridhara; and Aniruddha into Hrsikesa, Pradyumna and Damodara. These twelve tutelary deities are the presiding deities of the sun in the twelve months of the year. The names of these twelve deities are recited by the pious Hindus every day. There is a hymn of Nammaazhvaar's *Tiruvaaymozhi* which goes by the name of 'Panniru-tirunaamap-paattu' the recitation of which leads us to the God's Lotus Feet. The images of the Lord are distinguished to represent these twelve forms by varying the order of the appurtenances held in the four hands of each image.

The third state of Brahman is *vibhava* which is the descent of Isvara among beings by means of forms similar to that *genus.* It is a periodic invasion of *krpa* (mercy) into all species and into the history of the humanity when evil triumphs over goodness and creates a crisis in

moral life. The ten principal descents are *Matsys* (Fish), *Koorma* (Tortoise), .*Varaaha* (Boar), *Narasimha* (man-Lion), *Vaamana*(Dwarf), Parasuraama, Balaraama, Krishna and Kalki. The redemptive grace of *vibhava* is realised in the recovery of *Vedas* from its destroyers, the extraction of nector from the waters of life, the maintenance of cosmic order and the law of righteousness and the living assurance of salvation to all being.

The fouth state, namely, the immanent form of God is the *Antaryaamin*, the in-dwelling Self of the individual in the region of the heart. The Lord in this form stays with the individual self as its friend in its states of experience such as heaven, hell etc, and is perceptible only to *yogins*. The moral idea of Isvara taking this form is making the souls pulsate with their creative life and participate in their inner joy and making the mortal selves immortal. Though He co-exists with the individual self, He is untouched by the taints inherent in the latter. According to Nammaazhvaar the hills like Tiruvenkatam, Tirumaaliruncolaimalai, the noisy ocean and Vaikuntha have been discarded as worhtless for His stay.

The fifth state of God is the permanent incarnation of *arca* (idol) worshipped in temples, houses, villages, towns, sacred places and hills. 'He assumes the form desired by His devotees'. The infinite God enters into the finite forms without the loss of infinity and for communing with the devotee that longs for His contact and for infinitising his religious consciousness. The *para* and *vyuha* forms of the Lord are beyond the reach of the denizens of this *terra firma*. All the living beings have not been gifted to live in times when the Lord chose to come down as divine descents; owing to lack of *jnaana* (wisdom) and *bhakti* (devotion) they are not able to see the ever-present *antaryaamin* in them. Hence the only alternative left to people is to resort to the *arca* form to satisfy the spiritual longings and aesthetic cravings.

Sareera-sareeri bhaava : This is body-soul relationship. It is the core principle of *Visishtaadvaitic Vaishnavism*. Isvara is called the inner self or soul (*sareeri*), because as long as the souls exist, He is in regard to sentient beings and non-sentient substances,their *adhaara*(support),their *niyanta*(controller or ruler) and their Lord, Master (*seshi*) for Whose purposes they exist. Sentient beings and non-sentient things form His body, since with regard to Him, they stand as substances supported by Him, controlled by Him and existing solely for the fulfilment of His purposes throughout their existence. This hypstatic relationship of the soul to God is clearly intuited by Nammaazhvaar in the line "atiyen ullaan utal ullaan"- 'He inheres in the soul and He inheres in the body' (*TVM*—8-8:2)

HITA (*means*) :

According to **Sri Vaishnavism**, Isvara is the object of knowledge which is the means to an end, *upaaya*, and also the object of the goal which is attainment; He is the means as being the giver of the Grace, and likewise He is *upeya* (end to be attained) because Himself the object or goal that is to be reached. He is the means to emancipation which is self-accomplished (*siddhopaaya*). As auxiliary to this means there are two other means, namely, *bhakti*(devotion) and *prapatti* or *saranaagati* (self-surrender). The course of the former is based upon *Upanishads* and involves training in three stages known as *karma-yoga*, *jnaana-yoga* and *bhakti-yoga* in the progressive realization of salvation. These three stages constitute the *saadhyoaaya* (the means to salvation which has to be effected by the aspirant). It is an arduous and precipitous path to emancipation hedged in by the exacting conditions and wearisome disciplines of *ashtanga yoga*. It cannot be easily practised by ordinary people. Further its adoption is restricted to the higher castes. The latter is meant for all and its source is to be traced mainly to the *Vaishnavite Aagamas* and the hymns of the Aazhvaars. It is a simple way. It is thc highest stage of God-love. The only requisite for this means is the change of heart or contrition on the part of the *mumuookshu*

and his absolute confidence in the saving Grace of the Lord. The spiritual experience of the Tamil seers (Aazhvaars) is epitomized in the *Saranaagati* of Nammaazhvaar who is extolled as the super-*prapanna* (the one who adopts *prapatti*) of *Sri Vaishnavism*. Almost all the Aazhvaars speak of their self-surrender to the Lord.

PURUSHAKAARA (mediation):

The role of Lakshmi, the chief consort of Naaraayana in the *prapatti*, is an important aspect to be noted. She is the concretion of mercy and offers an eternal assurance to erring humanity that the reign of righteousness is at heart also the reign of redemptive mercy. The Vaishnava theology his based its dual form of God-head as Lakshmi Naaraayana. Lakshmi resides in the heart of Naaraayana to redeem the sinning sundered self from its sinfulness. The Lord rules by law and Sri lives by love and the two are indissoluble and eternally wedded to each other. Among the six meanings of the word, '*Sri*', the most relevant one is the idea of Her converting Isvara as Ruler into Saviour by her timely intercession and mediation on behalf of the repentent sinner. Lakshmi is *svamin* to the self, and as mediator (*purusha-kaara*) she mediates on behalf of the sinner and is the eternal link of love between the Ruler and transgressor. As the link of loven, she mediates between the infinite that is omnipotent and the finite that is impotent, and transforms the majesty of law into the might of mercy. She transforms the former into the Saviour and the latter into penitent seeker after pardon. By Her beauty She lures the Lord and turns Him into the saviour; she draws the sinner by Her sweetness, and the sinner is saved by entire submission to His will. Hence *prapatti* is performed only through Her.

PURUSHAARTHA (goal of human endeavour):

This is release from the cycle of births and deaths. The victim of *samsaara* (bondage) is now a victor there of and a self-ruler and enjoys absolute freedom from the shackles of *karma* and the taint of error, evil, ugliness and other imper-

fections. He lives for ever in the Paramapada with the *nitya-suris* (Eternals) enjoying eternal bliss. He is immersed in the supreme and unsurpassable bliss of *Bramaanubhava* (experience of Brahman) without losing his self - being. It is a state of *saayujya* (intimate union) in which the unitive experience of bliss is present without the loss of self-existence. Feeling of oneness with God and the awareness that he is part of Him would give greater delight to the self who adopts *saayujya* aspect of existence.

RASHASYA-TRAYA (**the three secrets**) :

Ramanuja evolved a convincing exposition of *bhakti* (devotion), *jnaanam* (wisdom) and *prapatti* (self - surrender) according to which all these represent certain stages of *jnaana* itself. All the same, stress is laid more on *bhakti* and *prapatti* aspects of *jnaana*. It is in the light of this stress that the three esoteric doctrines have come to be formulated as the basis of Vaishnavite religion. The three secrets are known as *Moola-mantra, Dvaya* and *Carama-sloka*. The first states in a nutshell, the second makes the meaning more explicit and the third elaborates it still further.

The *Moola-mantra* is otherwise known as *Tirumantra*; it is the eight-lettered formula in three words. Its meaning is 'Om Namo Naaraayana!'. The *Dvaya* is so called because it treats of two points, namely, the means and the goal of attainment (the *upaaya* and the *upeya*). It is a gem of *mantra* and has prominence over other *mantras*. It is the twentyfive-lettered formula in ten words; it brings out the full implications of the supreme Truth. The meaning of the first part is 'I take refuge at the Feet of Sriman Naaraayana' and that of second part is 'Salutation to Sriman Naaraayana'. The first part reveals that the self has no other refuge than Naaraayana, and the second that it exists for no purposes other than those of Naaraayana. In both the parts the idea of the self having no other support is evident from the word 'Naaraayana'. The meaning of this *mantra* is that redemption is the result of

Lakshmi's mediation (*Purushakaara*) and that the soul should realise its utter destitution and seek no other refuge than the Lord.

The *Carama-sloka* is the final instruction of the Lord Krishna to Arjuna in the *Geeta*. It teaches how self - surrender is to be performed. It is a thirtytwo - lettered formula in twelve words. The meaning of the *mantra* is "Renounce all *dharmas* and take refuge in Me; I shall release you from all sins. Grieve not''. According to this *mantra* the Lord is ultimately both the endeavour and the goal, the *upaaya* and the *upeya*. The *Saadhayopaaya* is the act of self-surrender to the will of the Saviour and the *Siddhopaaya* is the Lord Himself. The Lord reveals Himself to the *prapanna* who seeks Him as his absolute refuge. The sinner seeks God and is saved and God seeks the sinner and is satisfied. The unique value of this *mantra* lies in its universal appeal to all sinners to seek refuge in Him and be saved.

It has been stated by the ancient Aacaryas that these three *mantras* have been enshrined in the four compositions of Nammaazhvaar; the purport of *Tirumantra* has been included in his *Tiruviruttam* and *Tiruvaacirium*, that of *Carama-sloka* in his *Periya-tiruvantaati* and that of *Dvaya* in his *Tiruvaaymozhi*.

TWO SCHOOLS OF VAISHNAVISM :

During the long history of *Sri Vaishnavism* in South India, there have come into existence two schools of *Naalaayiram* tradition, the one being known as *Vatakalai* owing to its alligience to Vedaanta Desika and the other *Tenkalai* relating to Manavaala - maamunikal. These names, *Vatakalai* and *Tenkalai*, are of very late origin and perhaps belong to a period subsequent to Manavaala-maamunikal. The *Vatakalai* school traces their origin of their dectrines to Kitaampi Aaccan who was in charge of serving food to Raamaanuja and the *Tenkalai* school does it to Empaar, the cousin and disciple of Raamaanuja. Neither of these scholars, however, left any written record of their theories. The main points on which

these two sects differed are said to be eighteen. These differences are mostly doctrinal and not philosophical. Besides these there are other minor differences, such as the shape of sect mark, etiquette, certain restrictions regarding food and service, the tonsure of widows and so on. But they have little philosophical or religious basis or background. The works of *Tenkalai* school which are mostly in Tamil are complementary to those of *Vatakalai* school and not contradictory to them. The eighteen points of doctrinal difference can be reduced to the single problem of *krpa* versus *karma* in its aspect of the practice of *upaaya*. Vedaanta Desika's view of *vyaaja* or occasion seems to be a good reconciliation of the two extreme views. The Lord is Himself the *upaaya* and the *upeya* and the true meaning of human responsibility consists in our responsiveness to the call of divine mercy. Even a gesture and change of heart and a feeling of unworthiness shown in infinitesimal degree on the part of the sinner evokes sympathy and elicits the infinite Grace of the Saviour. A spark of repentence destroys the whole load of *avidya-karma* and thus an infinite series of *karma* is annihilated by infinitesimal effort. It is the recognition of the fact that endeavour consists in recognising the futility of endeavour. This view preserves the idea of divine justice and provides for the domination of the Divine Grace which is its fruition. The vexed problem of *karma-krpa* riddle cannot be solved either by logic or by ethics. It can be dissolved only by the direct intuition of God which is the experience of the Aazhvaars. If such is the case, the distinction between the two schools regarding the working the *krpa* is a distinction without much difference.

SECTION : 2

Language and Literature

11. DEVELOPMENT OF SOUTH INDIAN LANGUAGES

Mr. President, Learned Fellow Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I feel really grateful to the authorities and friends of the All-India Oriental Conference who have conferred on me the unique honour of presiding over the Dravidic Studies Section of the 28th Session of the Conference. It was really a surprise for me when I learnt, sometimes ago, from my esteemed friend Dr. S. Shankara Raju Naidu that I had been elected to the present position at the 27th Session of the Conference. This news was later on conveyed to me by Dr. R.N. Dandekar the General Secretary of the AIOC. I am deeply conscious of my limitations. So this august assembly of the learned friends will be kind to me if I fall short of their expectations. I accepted this offer not because I can contribute something in the field, but only to have the opportunity of meeting and conferring with many learned scholars who have made a mark and won laurels in their respective fields and contributed significantly to the growth and development of Indian languages, literatures and culture.

I feel that I hardly deserve this tempting honour bestowed on me. But I am confident that I could perform the onerous

★ Presidential aderess of Prof Dr. N. Subbu Reddiar in the Dravidic Studies Section of the All-India Oriental Conference (28th Session) held at Karnataka University, Dhrwar in November, 1976.

duty assigned to me with your kind co-operation, paternal affection and fraternal kindness. Kindly accept my cordial welcome.

The Dravidic Studies Section was started in November 1946 at Nagpur with Prof. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai as President. This section comprises not only the four main literary languages viz. Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada but also more than sixteen minor languages each with a personality and character of its own. Dravidic Studies in addition to our languages and literatures includes the entire disciplines of Linguistics, History, Archaeology, Sociology, Ethnology, Politics, Paleography, Geography, Numismatics, Philosophy and Religion, Ethics and Metaphysics, Psychology and other allied subjects under humanities. Hence our studies require to have a strong footing and background in these disciplines as occasion demands.

The study of the Dravidian Languages, as forming part of one family, cannot be traced to any period earlier than the nineteenth century. The comparative study of Dravidian languages was placed on a sound basis by Rt. Rev. Robert Caldwell in 1856 when he published his monumental work *A Comparative Grammar of Dravidian Laguages*. The Dravidian languages, though they were not recognised as belonging to one family of languages, had been earlier studied and noticed by Western writers. We have already made references to the four literary languages of the Dravidian family. As for other Dravidian dialects, Coorg and Tulu, were also known as early as 1798. *Roberts* has given certain materials. In 1837 the Toda language had been noticed. Brahui was noticed as early as 1838 and Gondi in 1849. In 1853 a Kui grammar was published by *Latchmajee*. Kolami was recognised in 1866 and Malto in 1884. *The Linguistic Survey of India* refers to Parji and other Dravidian Languages. Konda and Gadba were brought to public notice in 1956. The Irula dialect, known also as Kurava and Erukala is now recognised to be a Dravidian dialect.[1]

1. Meenakshisundaram, T. P.: *A History of Tamil Language*, pp. 15-16

Many have written and much have been talked about these languages and the dialects in this conference and outside. There have been and there are serveral scholars devoted to the Studies and development of the Dravidian languages and literatures in all their branches. All of them richly deserve our congratulations. During recent years several institutions of learning and learned scholars have severally and jointly rendered immense and magnificient service for strengthening research in this field. Please permit me to mention a few individuals and institutions I was able to get at dircetly or indirectly.

TAMIL

The Department of Tamil, University of Madras, under the dynamic leadership of Prof. N. Sanjeevi has given a new fillip to Tamil research. Combined with the Tirukkural Research section functioning under the Department it is doing useful service. Since last session the Tamil Department has brought out the following research publications:

(1) *Palkaliap-palantamil* (2) *Intiya vitulaiyum Tamil Ilakkiya mum* (3) *Teyvat-tamil* (4) *Perunkaappiyac-Cirrilakkiyap-peruntamil* (5) *Tamil Aayvu* (Vols. 3 and 4) with Prof. N. Sanjeevi as Editor.

By individual efforts Dr. C. Balasubramaniyam, Reader in Tamil, has published *The Status of Women in Tamil Nadu during during the Cankam Age* (1976). Thiru M. Shanmugam Pillai, working in Tirukkural Research Section, has edited and published two works viz. (1)*Naagakumaara Kaaviyam* (an ancient Tamil epic) and (2) *Appandai Naathar Ula*.

The Tirukkural Research Section (concentrating on Literary aspect of Tirukkural) has so far brought out five publications. I am very proud to point out that one of the publications entitled *Tirukkural Neeti Ilakkiyam* (1970) by my learned friend Thiru K.D. Tirunavukkarasu formerly working here, now working as Associate Professor in tne Internationa Institute of Tamil Studies, has secured the Central Sahitya Akademi award of Rs. 5,000/-

Under the auspices of the Department, the following three small projects have just been completed by Prof. N. Sanjeevi. (1) *New Tamil Dictionary* (2) *Relative words in Dravidian Languages* (3) *References of Tirukkural from other Literatures and by* Individual effort (4) *Concordance in Ancient Tamil Literature* (5) *Literary criticism* have been just completed

Dr. C. Balasubramaniyan, Reader in Tamil, under the auspices of the Department, has completed (1) *Research on Peruntokai* (2) *Literary Beauties in Tirumurais* (3) *A Critical Study of Dr. M. Varadarajan's works.* (4) *The Noble Mu. Va.* and(5) *History and Development of Tamil Literary Criticism.*

Some projects (by other scholars) are in progress : (1) *The Style* of *Tirukkural* (2) *Concordance of Tamil Articles* published; in Tamil Journals and books by Thiru E. Sundaramurthy*n* Dr. M. Selvarajan is working on *Similes* in Bharathi Dasan's works; Thiru V. Jayadevan has just completed (1) *Nigandus in Tamil* (2) *Vocabulary and Dialogue* and (3) *Uric-col Nigandus-Words and Meanings.*

In the Tirukkural Research Section my learned friend Vidvan M. Shanmugam Pillai is working on (1) *Akam Conventions in Tirukkural* (2) *Concorddnce of Words and Phrases Tirukkural.* Two other scholars are conducting research on some useful projects. Thiru K. Mohanraju is working on (1) *Kural and Kurinjippaattu* (2) *Tolkaappiyam and Tirukkural* (3) *Similarities in Kural and Cankam Classics,* (4) *Articles on Tamilology in Tamil Encyclopaedia* (5) *Articles on Tamilology in Tamil Journals* (6) *Concerdance of Words and their Meanings in Cankam Literature.* Selvi T.S. Sathiyam is working on (1) *Tirukkural Research in Its Depth with Special Reference to20th century* (2) *Commentators-Concordance in their Age* and (3) *An Index of Akam Sayings in Cankam Literature.*

The Department of Tamil, Annamalai University, headed by my learned friend Prof. V. Sp. Manickam, has done some useful work in regard to Tamil Research. The Department has brought out *The Biographical Dictionary of Men of Letters*

in three Volumes. In addition to this it has published three learned treatises (1) *Seminar Papers on Literature* (2) *Seminar Papers on Grammar* and (3) *Seminar Papers on Cilappatikaaram.* Prof. V. Sp. Manickam has published a book on *Tamil Verbs* (in English). My learned friend Thiru K. Vellaivaranam has published *The History of Twelve Tirumarais* in two Volumes and Thiru Sivaprakasa Desikar Tirumantiram-3000 with commentaries.

The Tirukkural Research wing which is concentrating on Concordance and Comparative aspects has turned out good work. Thiru S. Dhanadapani Desikar has published two important comparative studies viz. (1) *Valluvar and Kampar* and (2) *Valluvar and Tamil Epics and the Philosophy of Valluvar.* Thiru Ramalingam has published *Tirukkural and Tamil Bharathams* and Thiru V. Venkatarama Chettiar *Raamaayanam-Uttarakaantam with Commentaries*.

The Department of Tamil, Sri Venkateswara University, was started in 1970 with the sole initiative of. Prof. N. Subbu Reddiar, who has struggled for nearly ten years for its establishment. The Government of Tamil Nadu came forward with a goodwill grant for its establishment, the University Grants Commission and the Govt. of Andhra Pradesh gave clearance. Within six years, the Department produced two Ph.D's with the guidance of Dr. N. Subbu Reddiar. Dr. N. Subbu Reddiar has conducted three Symposiums, one on *Tirukkural* (sponsored by Tamil Nadu Government), another on *Cilapatikaarma* (sponsored by UGC) and the third on *'Dr. M. Varadarajan's Fiction'* (sponsored by SV University) and the Research papers have been published in book form. The following University publications have been brought out : (1) Dr. N. Subbu Reddiar:- (i) *Muttollaayira Vilakkam;* (ii) *Paranippolivukal* (iii) Dr. N. Subbu Reddiar (Ed) : *Symposium Papers on Tirukkural*, 1974. Dr. N. Subbu Reddiar in collaboration with Dr. V. Varadhachari, now Emeritus Professor in Sanskrit, are doing translation of *Aaraayirap-ati* (commen-

tary of Tirukkurukaip-piraan Pillaan on *Tiruvaaymozhi* of Nammaazhvaar) with a plan of publishing it in three volumes. The first volume is ready for publication.

Individually Dr. N. Subbu Reddiar has so far published forty-three books. It was his humble opinion that besides higher research, the University and the University teachers must take some effort to spread higher knowledge to the community by way of Extension Lectures and writing books on modern knowledge. With this aim in view, Dr. N. Subbu Reddiar has published, besides books on Literature, Criticism Religion and Philosophy, Education and Psychology, thirteen books on Science, both serious and popular. Books on *Peaceful Uses of Atom*, *Radio for the Young*, *Television for the Young*, *Electronics for the Young*, *Rockets*, *Travel to the Moon*, *Iuterplanatary Travel*, *A Guide to Housewife*, *Our Body* are on popular science. Anukkaru Bowtheekam (*Nuclar Physics* translation) Maanida Udal (*A Science Book of Human Anatomy* translation) are books of serious nature intended for B.Sc. and M.Sc.students who undergo the courses in Tamil medium. Among these *Rockets* and *Our Body* secured cash prizes from the Govt. of Tamil Nadu and *Nuclear Physics* from the University of Madras.

As a Professor of Training College he has published four books, viz, *Teaching of Tamil*, *Teaching of Sciencc*, *Educational Psychology* and *UNESCO Source Book of Science Teaching* (Adaptation). Coming to the University, he has published books on Literary Studies, Literary Criticism and Religion and Philosophy. *Kavignan Ullam*, *Kaalamum Kavignarkalum Kaathal Ovienkal Arivukku Virunthu*, *Venkatam in Tamil Literature*, *Gandhiyatikal Nenchuvitu Thoothu* (Edition), *Kampanil Makkal Kural*, *Minor Characters in Kamparaamaayanam* are books by way of literary studies. *Studies in Kalinkattup-parani*, *Tolkaappiyam Kaattum Vaalkkai*, *Kavithai Anubhavan* are books on Literary Criticism. These are all his humble contributions for the spread of knowledge both for higher and popular learning.

The Department of Tamil, Madurai University, has so far brought out thirty research publications. Of them, *Tolkaappiya Ura' Valam, Akilanin Aayvatankal, Mu. Va. Aayvatankal, History of Tamil Draama, Treatment of Morphology in Tolkaappiyam* and so on are the research publications. The Tirukkural Research which is concentrating on social, political and religious aspects, has so far published five Volumes viz. *Tirukkural with Parimelazhakar's Commentary, Kural Kanta Porul Valvu, Kural Koorum Iraimaatchi, Valluvar Vakutta Arasiyal* and *Valluvar Vakutta Poruliyal.* My learned friend Dr. M. Shanmugham Pillai with his individual effort published the *Translation of Kuruntokai* in English which is no common achievement. He is qualified in linguistics and has brought out many publications on Linguistics such as *Ikkaala Mozhiyiyal* Vol. I and Vol. II.

The International Institute of Tamil Studies, Adaiyaru, Madras, has done good service in the field of Tamil Research. Dr. S.V. Subramaniyan, Director, has brought out among his many publications, (1) *Research Methodology* (2) *Tamil Literary Theories* (3) *Riddles in Tamil* : among his colleagues, Dr. P. Kothandaraman has published *A Course in Modern Standard Tamil* : Thiru A.A. Manavalan *Tamil Research through Journals.* The following Research Projects are in progress : (1) *A Companion to Tamil Literature* (2) *Bibliography of Tamil Classics translated into Foreign Languages* (3) *A Bibliography of Foreign Classics rendered into Tamil* (4) *Translation of Tamil Classics into English* (5) *Disserations in Tamilology*, (6) *Compilation of Research Papers published in English on Tamilology*, (7) *Who is Who of the Tamil Writers of the World.* Blueprints have been drawn for the following projects : (1) *Tamil-English Dictionary* (2) *Glimpses of Tamil Culture in South-East Asia*, (3) *A Comparative Study of Epics in Indian and South-East Asia with Special Reference to Tamil Nadu*, (4) *A Comparative* Study *of Tamil Nadu, India and South-East Asia* (5) *The Structure of Modern Literary Tamil*, (6) *Social Life in Raamaayana with Special Reference to Kamban* (7) *Contributions of the Tamils to the World Thought and Culure*, (8) *A Handbook of Technical Terms*

in Western Literature and Literary Criticism in Tamil, (9) *A Handbook of Tamil Literary Terms in English,* (10) *The Impact of Western Influence on Tamil Literature,* (11) *Tamil Prosody,* (12) *Foreign Influence on Tamil Prosody,* (13) *Comparative Study of Indian Literature,* (14) *History of Tamil Language,* (15) *Historical Dictionary of Tamil,* (16) *Tamil Literary Theories* in five volumes.

My learned friend Thiru Aravanan, Assistant Professor of Tamil, Pachaiyappa's College, Madras, has published as many as fourteen books. Of them, *Tolkaappiyak-kalanciyam, Tolkaappiya Oppiyal, Avinayam, ayntiram, Amutacaakaram, Intira Kaaliyam, Ilakkiya Oppaayvu* may be mentioned. Thiru M. Arunachalam, the well-known grandold scholar is working on a useful project to bring out the History of Tamil Literature century-wise in twenty volumes. Already ten volumes have been published. The Tamil world should thank him for his individual effort towards this direction. The Tamil Akademi started by Thiru T. S. Avinasilingam which has published *Tamil Encyclopaedia* in ten volumes has just now completed the *Children's Encyclopaedia* in thirteen volumes.

With the help of the individual genius the publishers such as The SISSW Publishing Sociery, the Tamil Puthakaalayam, M/s. S.R. Subramanya Pillai, M/s. Vanathi Pathipakam, the Meenakshi Puthaka Nilayam, the Navalar Puthaka Nilayam have brought out many publications on Literature, Literary Criticism, Religion, Philosophy and Culture.

TELUGU

The Post-graduate and Research Department of Telugu, University of Madras started with Thiru K. Ramakrishnayya as Reader, is now headed by Dr. G. Appa Rao, Reader. Courses have been offered in M.A. and M. Phil, in Telugu. Students are working for Ph D, also. Dr. G. Appa Rao, has brought out the following publications: (1) *Great Poets of the People*, (2) *Praja Kavulu,* (3) *Progressive Humanism,* (4)

Great Lives for the Young, (5) *A Book of Songs*. He has 21 research papers to his credit. Being an young and energetic person, he has immense potentiality for work.

The Post-graduate and Researcn Department of Telugu, Osmania University, now headed by Dr. B. Rama Raju has turned out useful work. The Department started its research work in 1952 and so far the Department has produced 33 Ph.D's during the years 1956-76 of which sixteen theses have been published. Dr. B. Rama Raju has published elevan books in English, Telugu and Sanskrit. In Telugu : (1) *Telugu Janapada Geya Sahityamu*, (2) *Telengana Palle Paatalu*, (3) *Veeragathalu*, (4) *Telugu Veerudu*; Edited : Three books in English : (1) *Folk Tales of Andhra Pradesh*; in Sanskrit : (1) *Vasucharitramu*, (2) *Jambaavathi Parinayamu*, (3) *Sivarattri Mahaatmyyamu*.

The Post-graduate and Research Department of Telugu, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupathi, now headed by Dr. G.N. Reddy, was started in 1959 and has so far produced eighteen Ph.D's. The following books have been published, through the University, by Prof. G.N. Reddy : *A Study of Telugu Semantics*; by Dr. J. Suryanarayana : *A Study of Telugu Compounds*; by Prof. K.Mahadeva Sassri : *Historical Grammar of Telugu*. There is a research project which envisages collection of all the material related to Mr. C.P. Brown ICS and other Western scholars on different aspects of Telugu language and Literature for building up a Research Cell. During the Fourth Plan period, the Department complied a *English-Telugu Dictionary*, which is being published by the Telugu Akademi, Hyderabad.

It is gratifying to note that there is an increase in the interest in *Desi* which is left to the collection and publication of songs, ballads and other popular verses.

KANNADA :

I am glad to report that Karnataka University has done wonderful service in the field of research in Kannada. The

learned Vice-Chancellor Sri R.C. Hiremath himself has contributed a lot for the development of Kannada by his large number and variety of publications, namely, Research Publications—28, Edited Works—19, Edited Works in Vachana Literature—17, Creative and Critical Works—16, the total coming to 70. We are uery happy that the reins of the highest academic body are in the hands of an erudite scholar. We are equally happy that the Department of Kannada of the Karnataka University is headed by an equally erudite shcolar in the person of Dr. M.S. Sunkapur who has also published 26 works through the Department and the University and 10 works individually and 19 papers (Refearch and Critical). The Institute of Kannada Studies affiliated to the Karnataka University has also bronght out a large number and variety of publications, viz. Editions of old classics—17, Vedanta Literature—16, Veerasaiva Literature—6, Jaina Literature—6. Brahmana Literature—3, Basavesvara Literature—4, Janapada Literature—13, Epigraphy Literature—6, Linguistics—2, Research Works (these)—7, Special Lectures—6, Translation—1, Other Literature—1 the total coming to 88.

The Institute of Kannada Studies started in December 1966 under the control of the University of Mysore in encouraging the study of Dravidian languages, Literatute, Culture, Art, Architecture, History, Philosophy etc. with reference to Kannada language. The Institute with different sections such as Translation Section, Encyclopaedia Section, Editing Section, has turned out wonderful work within a span of ten years. The main aim of the Translation Section is to bring out Kannada translations of important works pertaining to Science and Humanities. The Encyclopaedia Section has brought out so far eight volumes of Kannada Encyclopaedia in its plan of bringing out fifteen volumes. Under the subject Encylopaedia Scheme, there is a proposal of bringing out an Encyclopaedia of Kannada on various disciplines of study in the University level in eighteen volumes. Another impor-

tant project of the Institute is the revision and publication of Epigraphia Carnatica Volumes published by late B. L. Rice. So far three volumes have been revised and published. In these revised volumes, newly found inscriptions are also added, and new introduction to each volume based on modern research methodology for every inscription to satisfy the requirement of the research scholars is given. The Editing Section has already published forty books from old manuscripts. This section is also collecting old manuscripts and preserving them by using modern preservation techniques; rare manusripts are being microfilmed.

A project with the aid of the University Grants Commission to collect and edit the 'Haridasa Sahityas' has been started and it has already brought out four volumes. The Institute has also undertaken the project of bringing out *The History of Kannada Literature* in ten volumes; so far three volumes have been published. Another project to bring out *The History of Kannada Language* in two volumes is also in progress. Another noteworthy feature of the Institute is that a provision has been made to teach Telugu, Tamil and Malayalam languages to Kannadigas and to teach Kannada to non-Kannada speakers by utilising the language laboratory for enabling the students to understand the phonetic features of the language.

MALAYALAM

There has been brisk activity in the field of Malayalam in recent years. The ten-volume Encyclopaedia Project of the National Book Stall has been completed. The Government sponsored Encyclopaedia Project is progressing and the three volumes have already been published. The Malayam Lexicon Project of the Kerala University has already brought out 3 volumes. The State Language Institute, which was under the direction of Shri N. V. Krishna warrier till recently publiseed more than 400 modern works and translation of standard works. The State Sahitya Academi has just now started a monthly Bulletin *Satityacakravilam* to give information about

activities in the literary field. The Academy has just now published a detailed Directory on modern writers in Malayalam.

Among some of the important writers who passed away recently are the young poet Vayalar Ramavarma, the progressive writer Edasseri Govardan Nair, the dramatist Ceruked Govinda Pisharoti, Karur Nilakantha Pillai who was responsible for starting the co - operative society of writers and K. Damodar who wrote several works including the *History of Kerala*

In this connection, we will be failing in our duty if we do not pay our tributes and sentiments of appreciation to the prose writers, in general, of all the Dravidian languages and to writers of novels, short stories and plays in particular. All have tried, no doubt, to depict faithfully the society in which they are members. They select themes from all sections of society and depict the national, social, family and individual conflicts at all levels. Progressivism, nationalism and condemning communalism and superstition have been their dominating note in general, their chief objective being to bring about equality, fraternity and loyalty with a sense of duty, decency, decorum and discipline. We are all very happy that the Tamil novelist Akilan, who has already secured many awards from the Govt. of Tamil Nadu and Sahitya Akademi, has now secured Jnanapeeth Award this year.

It may be pertinent in this connetion if I take the opportunity to offer some suggestions for the betterment of Dravidic Studies. The following 5-point formula may be kept in our minds :

1. Institution of a University for Dravidic Studies in a Central place on the lines of Banaras Sanskrit University with equal status to all the four South Indian languages. Here opportunities have to be provided for regular Post Graduate courses giving importance to the comparative study with a scope for original independent research leading to Ph.D. and D. Litt. degrees.

2. Faithful and authenic translations of all major classical works, from one Dravidian language into the other three.

3. A powerful forum in the shape of a 'Journal of Dravidic Studies' is an urgent necessary through which at least scholars may come together.

4. Comparative study of literary works and literary trends by learned scholars who are well-versed in one or two languages.

5. Bringing out 'A Rigidly Historical Grammar' of all the Dravidian languages on scientific lines.

I hope the respective State Governments will come forward with help if we make an earnest attempt in this direction. Scholars endowed with dynamism should come forward to move the matter with their respective State Governments. Efforts may be made to get aid from theUniversity Grants Commission also for translating some of my suggestion into action. Time has now come for the Departments of Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam in our Universities and the Dravidian scholars meeting once in two years to coordinate and to frame a plan of work for at least two years to achieve this end.

Let me take this oppurtunity to sincerely thank all my scholarly friends and well-wishers who have furnished me with authentic information with the details of the respective fields. The information I have given is not complete and full.

Once again I take this occasion to thank the authorities of the All - India Oriental Conference for offering me this unique position of pride and privilege and you, the Fellow Delegates, and chosen scholars and the VIPs, for honouring me with your hearty co-operation and patient hearing. I invoke the Lord of the Seven Hills who is continusly showering Grace on me for giving me necessary good health, both body and mind, to contribute something perceptible in the advancement of knowledge and to take strides in the onward direction and get ourselves accomplished with greater glory and more satisfaction in the years to come.

Let the Almighty bless us all! JAY HIND ! !

12. TIRUKKURAL AND ITS RELEVANCE TO MODERN AGE★

Tiruvalluvar, the sage of Mylapore and the author of *Tirukkural*, is tho best product of the pre-imperial age. No other luminary of that age could come anywhere near him in profundity of wisdom, universal appeal and eternal validity. He deserves to be ranked among he greatest educators of the world. He is with Sankara, Raamaanuja and Madhva. He represents the true Tamil spirit and is verily the Manu of the Tamil country.

The date of Tiruvalluvar can be fixed only in terms of a big segment of time, since his biography is woven by folklore and legend which present amusing and fantastic stories of his antecedents, nativity and profession. Like all great luminaries of the past, he has left behind nothing about his own life and has become of the subject of monstrous fabrications from out of which very little can be cited as ingredients of a reliable biography. But Prof V. R. Raamachandra Dikshitar would assign him to the first or second century B.C. and he has a cogent dlscussion in support of his theory. Such an ancient work has the unique distinction of being owned by every religion and denomination which is, at once, a tribute to the universality of its appeal and application. It breaks new grounds in aphoristic literature. Its uniqueness gets

★ Talk in the AIR, Vijayawada.

enriched by its high literary value also. So it has been translated into many languages of the world. One English scholar M. Ariel speaks of this work as "the master-piece of Tamil literature - one of the highest and purest expressions of human thought". We shall therefore accept only the historicity of Tiruvalluvar and his work and leave the concoctions and guesses about his life alone.

Tirukkural consists of 1330 couplets distributed in 133 chapters consisting of ten couplets in each. It is divided into three parts; these are *Arattup - paal* or the part on *Dharma* or Virtue, *Porutpaal* or the part on *Artha* or Government and Society and *Kaamattup-paal* or the part on *Kamam* (Inpam) or Love. What is separately treated by other books as the fourth ideal of Man - *Moksha* or salvation - comes within Tiruvalluvar's comprehensive vision of *Dharma* or *Aram*. The ideal citizen becomes, as it were, the goal of his *Artha*. The venerable sage goes down to the bed rock of human nature and his statements become applicable to all, irrespective of caste, creed or community or the country to which a person belongs, though the couplets appear to be addressed to the kings, ministers and ambassadors. Love here is not treated as in other *Kamasaastras;* it is the Love of the Cankam age; and the 250 couplets herein are, in short, 250 love songs of the Cankam age, crystallised with high ideals and purified. The work is universal in its appeal, emphasizing the truths of life which remain true in all ages and in all lands. Such was the grasp of his essentials even in an age when exteriors misled men as a will-o'-the-wisp. Giving as he does, his poetic vision of moral principles, his epigrams cease to be merely didactic, lifeless platitudes and become inspired poetry.

The sage of Mylapore has not produced a mere didactic work in the sense of its prescribing a moral code. Its moral import and value are the highest, but it is more a summation of what is liveable as well we will see presently. The sage is concerned with life in this world as it not only *ought to* be

lived, but also can be lived. His is a book of morals evolved from the actual life of the people and easily applicable to the work-a-day world. In short, his was an idealization of Tamil way of life, universally applicable to all. Let me explain a few concepts developted by Tiruvalluvar and how they are applicable and are relevant to the modern age.

The first part or *Aram* of *Tirukkural* emphasizes individual virtues that have at the same time direct application to life in family and society at large. Virtue, says the sage, will confer heaven and wealth and what greater source of happiness can man possess he asks. He further says that there can be no greater source of good than practice of virtue and there can be no greater source of evil than the forgetfulness of it. Tiruvalluvar looks upon the ideal set-up of the family as the nucleus of an ideal society. Domestic life is the foundation of community life. The virtues of a householder are relevant in a social context also. A good householder alone can be a good citizen. Chapters on the obtaining of good sons, cherishing guests, gratitude and impartiality found under the section *Illaraviyal* (Domestic virtue) constitute an amplification of the true concept of citizenship. As regards good offspring, the Tamil sage says that the evils of the seven births shall not touch those who obtain children of good disposition, free from vice. On gratitude which is a rare commodity in modern society, his statements are illuminating. Please consider : 'A favour conferred in time of need, though it be small, is much larger than the world'. 'He who has killed every virtue may yet escape, there is no escape for him who has killed a benefit'. The saint stresses the importance of impartiality in the statements : 'The worthy and unworthy may be known by the existence or otherwise of good offspring'. 'Freedom from obliquity of speech is rectitude, if there be corresponding freedom from bias of mind'. The saint stresses such qualities as the possession of self-restraint, decorum, forbearance, avoiding backbiting, renown etc., for a householder; these qualities are important for the citizens

also. All the two hundred couplets of *Illaraviyal* (Domestic virtue) from which form a major division of the *Arattup-paal* present the virtues of the householder and citizen emphasizing or stressing certain noble qualities in one way or other.

In *Turavaraviyal* (Ascetic virtue), but for the chapter on *Tavam* (Penance), all chapters deal with social virtues. Even the chapter on Penance is not an exposition on 'sack cloth and ashes' and running away from the reality of social life, but one on self-restraint or self-discipline which has the highest degree of value to the common man. Tiruvalluvar's *Tavam* is the development and practice of inner discipline leading to self-realization and they alone will be deemed true performers of penance who cause to exercise the greatest patience, who take care of the comports of others, who do not become subject to a vengeful attitude and who are prepared for any sacrifice.

The goals of life, according to Tiruvalluvar, are to serve, to love, to sacrifice, if necessary, to live it well and leave it with dignity and honour. The ambition of every individual should be to grow to his fullest stature to be able to leave foot-prints on the sands of time. When one reads *Tirukkural* deeply, and carefully, one cannot escape the thought that Tiruvalluvar's ambition was to make a *Saanron* (perfect man) of every individual. This saanron concept is to be found in many contexts in the anthology of *Puranaanooru* (a Cankam work) and it is this that Tiruvalluvar spelt out in 1330 couplets. I may also mention that 'Saanron' is a beautiful word in Tamil and it has no equivalent in any other language. We can agree with Sri C. Rajagopalachari when he says that Tiruvalluvar's approach to moral doctrine is marked by a very thorough knowledge of human psychology and a desire to help imperfect men with practical hints in the struggle against evil. Throughout we can see how the saint brings everthing down to the level of practicality without losing hold of the ideal.

Let us now turn to the second major division of *Tirukkural* called *Porutpaal* (wealth). This division also emphasizes social qualities applicable to all individuals and at all times, and reaches far beyond most of the *Arthasaastra motifs* which have reference mostly to the art of government. Though royalty is brought in the *Porutpaal* and is ostensibly its theme, it is not the highly exalted royalty based on the dictum "the king can do no wrog", but a royalty symbolizing the aspirations and virtues of the common man. All the virtues, supposedly applying to a king in the four sub-divisions *Arasiyal* (Royalty), *Amaichiyal* (Ministers of State), *Angaviyal* (the Essentials of a State) and *Ozhipiyal* (Appendix), barring those having technical references to government, are those applicable to the commoner. Only a few chapters in *Porutpaal* refer to the art of governance: and even these are shorn of any divine right theory. It is remarkble that a whole section, the Appendix, is devoted to citizenship virtues such as nobility, honour, greatness, perfectness, courtesy, dignity of labour etc., Individual and social virtues making for individual self-development and social harmony were developed within the environment in whioh nature with her irresistible charm and bounties, inspired less of thoughts, of death and another world, less painful than this one.

Many of the statements made under the sub-heads royalty, the minsters of state and the essentials of state made two thousand years ago are even now applicable to the powers that be. Consider for example the following statements:

"Never to fail in these four things fearlessness, liberality, wisdom and energy is the kingly characters".

"These three things, namely, vigilence, learning and bravery, should never be wanting in the ruler of a country".

"The whole world will exalt the country of the king who is easy of access, and who is free from harsh language".

"The wise are those who know beforehand what will happen; those who do not know this are the unwise".

"The prosperity of him who does not timely guard against faults, will perish like straw before fire".

"The king, who is without the guard of men who can rebuke him, will perish even though there is no one to destroy him".

Tiruvalluvar's statements regarding the ministry of state will be a good administrative manual for the present-day administrators who are elected representatives. Look at the following statements:

"The minister is one who can make an excellent choice of means, time and manner of execution, and the difficult understanding itself; the minister is one who is able to comprehend the whole nature of an undertaking, execute it in the best manner possible, and offer assuring advice in time of necessity".

"Those ministers who are destitute of executive ability will fail to carry out their projects, although they may have continued aright"

The Saint emphasizes the power of speech as best qualification of a minister. Consider the following statements:

"Understand the qualities of your hearers and then make your speech; for superior to it, there is neither virtue nor wealth"

"It is impossible for any one to conquer him by intrigue who possesses power of speech, and is neither faulty nor timid"

"If there be those who can speak on various subjects in their proper order and in a pleasing manner, the world would readily accept them"

Tiruvalluvar stresses purity in action, power in action, the best method of action etc., in a minister. He is a great political philosopher. He speaks about fortification of the

country, the method of accumulating wealth, the excellence of the army, military spirit etc., as the essentials of any state. Indiscriminate taxation of any state creates restlessness in the people. The powers that be should rather avoid than seek accumulation of wealth which does not flow out with mercy and love.

The health of people of any nation is as important as any other thing. So the poet offers a manual of advice on diet. "There will be no disaster to one's life if one eats with moderation, food that is not disagreeable", says the saint. He stresses further that a person will be afflicted with numberless diseases, who eats immoderately, ignorant of the rules of health. The Doctor's role is also very important in maintaining the health of a nation. The Saint advises the physician to enquire into the nature of the disease, its cause and its method of cure and then treat faithfully according to medical rules.

The Poet,s advice on the food front should capture the attention of modern politicians who dabble in the food situation indiscriminately by their thoughtless policies and create artificial scarcity of essential commodities. Agriculturists, says the poet, are, as it were, the linch-pin of the world for they support all other workers who cannot till the soil. His advice on the method of cultivation is of high value even to the modern agricultural scientist.

Thus we see that there is no subject on earth which the philosopher-saint has not touched. We can reiterate, after Kavuniyanaar who is supposed to be a Cankam luminary, that the short disticks which the learned poet Valluvar has composed in order that we may know the ancient right way, are sweet to the mind to meditate on; sweet to the ear to hear; and sweet to the mouth to repeat; and they moreover form a sovereign medicine to promote good and prevent evil actions. This message of the philosopher-saint given two thousand years ago still holds good in full.

13. VEDIC REFERENCES IN CANKAM LITERATURE ★

The Frame of Reference : This paper has reference to the volume of Tamil Literature going by the name of 'Cankam Literature.'[1] This name has a special connotation in terms of the chronology, social life and culture of the Tamils because there is a visible gap between this literature and later Tamil Literature. The style, the subject-matter, the social themes and the religious life that the Cankam Literature describes are believed to have a distinctness in relation to the same aspects of later Tamil Literature. Tamil scholars have, therefore, accepted the name, if not for any other reason, at least for the reason that the works of the Cankam collection constitute a compact grouping under a distinct name. This grouping has been rendered possible by the inventory of the Cankam poets which Nakkeerar gives in his commentary to

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★ Paper presented to the Seminar on *Vedas* held in Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati in February 1964.

1. It consists of anthologies of short lyrics and longer poems. The eight collections go by the name of *Ettu-t-tokai*. They are: (i) *Narrinai* (ii) *Kuruntokai* (iii) *Ainkurunooru* (iv) *Patirru-p-pattu* (v) *Paripaatal* (vi) *Kalittokai* (vii) *Akanannooru* (viii) *Puranaanooru*. The longer poems the collections of which go by the name *Pattu-p-paattu* (Ten Idyll's) are (i) *Tirumurukaarru-p-patai* (ii) *Porunaraaru-patai* (iii) *Sirupanaarru-p-patai* (iv) *Perumpanaarru-p-patai* (v) *Mullai-p-paattu* (vi) *Netunalvaatai* (vii) *Kurinci-p-paattu* (viii) *Pattina-p-paalai* (ix) *Malaipatukataam*.

Iraiyanaar-Akapporul.[2] As we are not concerned at the moment with the Cankam legends or the date of Nakkeerar, and as Nakkeerar's inventory is a good enough starting point, we will be concerned only with the works of the authors in the inventory. May be, the whole problem of the Tamil Cankam would need to be re-examined thoroughly; but our acceptance of the term Cankam Literature to mean the body of works ascribed to the authors in Nakkeerar's inventory is for the convenience of limiting the scope of our investigation to what have generally been accepted as the earliest Tamil works extant. Moreover, this much could be said about them: They are certainly among the earliest Tamil works.

The date of the Cankam or the Cankams has, so far been, anybody's guess. The student of Tamil Literature and the historian of the Tamil country seem to take two different positions. While the enthusiastic, proud Tamil scholars would like to push the Cankam far back to 1000 B.C., the cautious historian would hesitate to accept anything earlier than the first century A.D. There is no doubt, that the Cankam Literature is definitely anterior to the *Pallava* period and the age of the Aazhvaars and the Naayanmaars; and if we should accept the fifth century as the date for the beginning of the *Pallava* supremacy, the Cankam works must be assigned to a pre-fifth century date. The Cankam works speak of prosperous *Chola, Paandya* and *Cera* kingdoms. These must refer to the earlier *Cholas, Paandyas* and *Ceras* who preceded the *Pallavas*. It may, therefore, be considered a safe assumption for purposes of this paper that the period which it covers is between the sixth century B.C and the fourth century A.D. accepting the extremes of serious historical research.

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2. According to the tradition embodied in the commentary of *Iraiyanaar Akapporul* the total number of poets of Cankam period comes to 449 (vide the commentary to *cutras* (no. 1.) But the Canka Ilakkiyam (Samajam edition·1940) accounts for as many as 473. This aggregate exclude the anonymous authors of 88 poems (3 in *Akanaanooru,* 10 in *Kuruntokai,* 56 in *Narrinai,* 5 in *Patirru-p-pattu* and 14 in *Puranaanooru* and includes 35 poets who are named after some identifiable feature or expression in their poems.

Method of study : It is necessary to administer a caution before getting down to the subject proper. A superficial study of each one of the Cankam works is bound to lead one to the conclusion that the work has no reference to Tamil life in its pristine purity. We shall show that this impression is not correct, but has been enforced by the ignorance of the right technique of studying ancient works. Many scholars, in spite of the profundity of their knowledge, have easiy allowed themselves to be taken in by the first impression of their studies of ancient literature. To some, it has been a means of sustaining their own pet theories and prejudices. To some others, the lack of the knowledge of the technique of sifting the contact of the works has seriously affected the validity of their inferences.

A Combination of Two Layers : We hare to keep in mind the following realities before beginning to assess any early work of literature:

(*a*) What is extant in early literature is only a small fraction of the quantity produced at various periods In other words, what is extinct in early literature, must have been many times more than what is extant

(*b*) In the works which are available at least, two layers. have to be identified. One has reference to the life of the region to which the works belong without any dilution by an exotic cultural element. Another has reference to the exotic intrusions. Both the layers are often to be found within the same works.

(*c*) In the assessment of any ancient work of literature it is necessary, first of all, to separate what is indigenous culturally from what is exotic.[3]

3. The TLK for instance presents both the layers. It is not difficult to identify the pure Tamil conventions from what may be considered as foreign elements. Tolkaappiyanaar himself seems to have provided for the foreign elements. It is evident that frcm the days of Tolkaappiyanaar it was not possible to maintain the pristine purity of Tamil because of the on-rush of outside influences. But it should be to the credit of the classical writers that they presente the pure aspects of Tamil life and culture while mentioning the new Inflnences. The distinguishing mark of classical Tamil literature is that it is more Tamil than later day Tamil literature.

Applying the above to Tamil Literature, we realize that certain characteristics of ancient Tamil Literature render the indigenous and the exotic very difficult to be differentiated. Most of the Cankam works are anthologies. These anthologies are collections of works and poems written in different periods by different authors. Among these, there are two types, broadly speaking. One is an unclassified random collection of works each of which is complete in itself, and the other, a collection of classified poems by diverse hands. An example of the first type is the *Pattu-p-paattu* which contains ten minor works on ten different topics. Examples of the second type are the *Puranaanooru*, and the *Akanaanooru*. The *Puranaanooru* containing four hundred verses is bound by the common theme of *puram* or human activities like war. administration, human relations, etc., which lie outside of intimate family life. But the verses are all disjointed. Each verse is self-contained by itself and does not necessarily lead to the next. The four-hundred *puram* verses contain both the pure indigenous culture of the Tamils and the exotic influences. Likewise, the *Akanaanooru* must be viewed as a little encyclopaedia of the love and the family life of the ancient Tamils in both the layers, indigenous and the exotic. The two layers are laid bare by the beautiful couplet :

poyyum vozhuyum tonriya pinnar
ayyar yaathanar karanam enpa[4]

Tolkaappiyanaar refers to two practices—the indegenous and the exotic. The indigenous system of marriage was substituted by an exotic one because the former ceased to maintain its reputed high standard. '*ayyar yaathanar karanam*' is the reference to the foreign intrusion. Tamil marriage in ts ideal form was not '*karanam*' but a simpler one involving adherence to the highest moral principles as an article of faith.

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4. *TLK-Porulatiikaaram-Sutram* 143 (*Ilampooranam*). Vide also *Sutra*-401 of *Collatikaaram* cf the same work. This *sutra* deals with words borrowed from Sanskrit.

Applying the same principle to the other anthologies and the works of the Cankam period, it should be possible to separate the pure indigenious from the exotic. But, as has been pointed out earlier, a number other factors make the separation some what difficult. The most important of these factors is the commentary written for each of the works. The commentaries were certainly produced long after the original works. By then, the social, political and cultural conditions had changed rapidly. The commentators no doubt achieved their very best, but they could not avoid projecting themselves into their commentaries. Whatever layer they are commenting on becomes complicated by their importing a third layer in their interpretation. Saayana of the Vijayanagar period presented comprehensive commentaries for all the *Vedas*. Scholars hailed them and continue to hail them as masterpieces. But no one can deny that with all the profundity and depth of scholarship which he possessed, the interpretation of all the Vedic rituals dealt with in the *Vedas* could not be taken to be accurate as he undertook this task several hundreds of years after the *Vedas* came into being and most of the Vedic rituals like *Saastras* had ceased to be in practice by his time. In the same manner, the Tamil commentators to the Cankam works cou'd never take themselves basic into the actual periods of the original compositions and could only explain ancient ideas with reference to their own understanding of them against their contemporary environment and background. They had very little regard for notions like chronology and never hesitated to make contemporaries of personages belonging to different epochs.[5] All these limitations and difficulties not withstanding, a good student of Tamil and South Indian history can separate the exotic elements from the indigenous. It may be found that most, if not all, of the Cankam work, appear deceptive in the sense that, to a superficial student none of the works will appear to contain anything of Tamil life and culture in their pure indigenous forms. The occur-

5. Most commentators seem to project themselves and their age in their commentaries, oblivious to the real age of the works they are commenting upon.

rence of a large number of Sanskrit words, the references to episodes and anecdotes of Sanskrit Literature and the exotic nature of some of the themes themselves are likely to blind the casual studet to the indigenous layer. Each anthology of the Cankam Literature has many chronologies. In this paper if the accent is on the references to the *Vedas* in the Cankam Literature, it is only by way of analysing the exotic element for a separate study. It should not be construed as sustenance to the wrong notion, sometimes propagated, that the Tamils had no culture worth the name and only after the so-called Aryanisation of the South did the Tamils start a refined life. As this paper is presented, the author has the fond hope that some scholar may successfully analyse the indigenous element of Tamil culture from the material available and show that the Tamil country had developed a distinctive culture and civilization of its own, prior to Aryanisation.

The Knowledge of the Vedas: It may be asserted that there is not a single Cankam work that does not mention the *Vedas* or the Vedic practices and concept directly or indirectly. Quite a number of the works refer to the number of the *Vedas*. The *Puranaanooru,* in verse number 2, mentions the number of the *Vedas* as four. This verse is panegyric on Ceramaan Peruncorru Utiyan Ceralaatan. Lines (17-20) of the verse which are relevant for our purpose can be translated as follows :

> "Even if milk should lose its sweetness and become sour, even if the sun should lose its light, and become dark, even if the moral code with four *Vedas* should change, may you, consistent and clever in statecraft, live gloriously with your ministers and next of kin for a long time'

In verse number 6 there is reference to '*naanmarai*'. In verse number 15 again the number of the *Vedas* has been men-

tioned with an attribute : "the good and faultless scripture," "the four *Vedas*". In verse number 166, the number four as referring to the *Vedas* is mentioned as 'twice two'.

In the *Pattu-p-paattu*, in the work *Maturaik-k-kaanchi* in line 468, there is mention of the 'best *Vedas*'. The commentator Naccinaar-k-kiniyar explains this line as the three *Vedas* excluding the *Atharvana-veda* which was not given the same status as the other three *Vedas*, as its subject was more this-worldly than other-worldly.

Apart from these specific references to the number of the *Vedas*, it is found that many of the poets of early Tamil Literature were aware of the number of the *Vedas* or the *Vedas* in general terms must have been aware of at least the names of the *Vedas* if not their actual contents. The commentators[6] on these seem to revel in their intimate knowledge of the *Vedas*. The commentaries contain the names, *Rk*, *Yajus*, *Saama* and *Atharvana*. Many of the commentators were Sanskrit scholars of no mean repute and not a few of them were steeped in the Vedic wisdom.

Sacrifices : The concept of sacrifice was not exotic to the Tamil country. The references to *yaagas* may indicate only the Aryanised forms of sacrifice that either substituted or coexisted with the indigenous form. The Tamil term '*velvi*' is a pure one and is not derived from Sanskrit. It may be stated almost as an axiom of linguistics that the first incentive for borrowing from another language is furnished by need. The need arises when an object or a practice or an idea is exotic to the experience of one's culture, but has invaded the culture and seeks to get integrated into it. Quite a uumber of Sanskrit terms had to be accepted as the inevitable consequence of the irresistable Aryanisation of the South; and the Tamils, instead of coining new words for new concepts and ideas, accepted the Sanskrit terms purely as a matter of convenience.

6. The commentator on PRN may be cited here. Others like a Parimelazhakar Cenaavaraiyar and Peraasiriyar were scholars in Sanskrit also.

Only three interpretations are possible to explain the availability of pure Tamil word for a particular concept and also its Sanskrit equivalent, both being interspersed in early Tamil works. The concept itself was nothing new to the Tamils, and it had been an integral part of their indigenous culture. Another is that the pure Tamil word referred to the Tamil way of understanding the concept and the Sanskrit equivalent to the Aryan interpretation of the concept. A third is that both the terms were used alternatively to mean the same. Taking the term '*velvi*' we have to see in it a pure Tamil practice that was later supplemented and possible not completely supplanted by the Aryan term. Let us go into a little detail.

Tamil works of the earlier period speak of two types of sacrifices referred to by the general term '*velvi*'. The two types are '*Arakkala-Velvi*' and '*Marakkala-Velvi*'. The forme category must have had reference to sacrifices by way of propitiating the higher powers. Perhaps the Tamils had a simpler, less ritualistic form of *yaagas* than the Aryans. Wars constituted the *Ararakkala-velvi*'. It is by way of a literary development of this idea that, perhaps, we have the *Parani* type of literature at a later period. Though this type of literature was born in the heyday of the Aryanisation of the Tamil country, the form and the idea were essentially Tamil. One could suspect that the *Parani* was the poetic vision of the Tamil '*Marakkala-velvi*' represented not as a naked war but as a sacrifice in itself. That may be the reason why we have no parallel to the *Parani* composition in any other literature of the world. The term '*velvi*' used may be taken to suggest that the martial spirit of the ancient Tamils was given the high status of a sacred rite.

The Aryanisation of the Tamil country implied a clash, at first, between the indigenous form and the exotic, and later a reconciliation arrived at by both the forms coexisting. Over-Aryanised or indoctrinated Tamil chieftains possibly took a fancy to the exotic system for its novelty. The

unsophisticated sections conformed to the older system. References to both are innumerable in the Tamil classics. It is now our business to identify and locate the exotic system as germane to our present study.

A number of interesting details about Vedic sacrifices are available in Cankam Literature. Quite a number of Vedic sacrifices were perfomed in the Tamil country even long after they had ceased to be practised in Northern India. Some of the early Tamil rulers prided themselves in having prefixes to their names that refer to their having performed one or the other of the sacrifices. One *Paandyan* king is known as '*Palyaagasaalai Mutukutumip- Peruvazhuthi*. A *Chola* king is called '*Raajasooyam Vetta Perunar-killi*' or '*Perunar·killi* who performed the *Raajasooya* sacrifice'. Paandyan Nedun-cezhiyan is credited with having performed Vedic sacrifices under the guidance of the Brahmins. Nalankilli and Kaari are also mentioned among the Tamil rulers that patronised Brahminism and performed sacrifices.[7] The other sacrifices possibly performed by the early Tamil kings are the '*Soma yaaga*' and the '*Asvamedha yaaga*' The '*Asvamedha*' had reference to the sovereignty of the king performing it and though it is not described directly in any Tamil work, the Tamil rulers must have certainly understood the purpose of the sacrifice and the honour of being a performer of the *Asvamedha sacrifice*.

In verse number 166 of the *Puranaanooru* the number of sacrifices is mentioned as twenty-one and in explanation of this number the commentary lists the following sacrifices: (*a*) Seven types of *Soma-yajnas* (*b*) Seven types of *Havir-yajnas* and (*c*) Seven types of *Paaka-yajnas*. The seven *Soma-yajnas* are: *Agnistoma*, *Atyaagnistoma*, *Ukthya*, *Sodasin*, *Vaajapeya Atiraatra*, *and Aaptoryaama*. The seven *Havir - yajnas* are : *Agnyadheya*, *Agnihotra*, *Darsapoornamaasa*, *Aagrayana*, *Caatur-*

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7. Srinivasa Iyengar, P. T. : *The History of the Tamils* p.p. 470-4 ,5

maasya, *Niraaudha-pasubaandha* and *Santraamani*. The seven *Paakayajnas* are : *Astakaa*, *Paarvanasthaalipaaka*, *Sraaddha*, *Sraavani Agrahaayani*, *Caitri*, *and Aasvayuji*.

Though the list of names is furnished by a later commentator, the author of the verse Aavoor Moolankizhaar must be regarded as referring to only these twenty - one *yaagas* in his summation. Many of the *yaagas* must have been performed at the time the poet composed the verse. It may be stated in a general way that after the processes of Aryanisation had started in the Tamil country the *yaagas* were popularised among the chiefs of Tamil Country.

Quite a number of interesting details relating to the performance of sacrifices can also be located in Cankam Literature. The construction of *yaagasaalas* attributed to a number of Tamil kings was according to the vedic specifications. Materials like *kusa* (*darbha*), *samit* (faggot), fried rice and the *pacu* or the animal to be sacrificed are mentioned in a number of texual situations.[8] The sacrificial fire is also mentioned. In the *Tirumurukaarrup-patai*, there is reference to the three Vedic fires—*Aahavaneeya*, *Dakshna* and *Garha pateeyaa*. A few verses actually describe some of the details of the sacrifices themselves.

In verse number 15 of *Purananooru*, there is the following descrition : "Are the *yaagasaalaas* with the *yoopasthambha* greater in number-*yaagasaalaas* in which *yaagas* prescribed by good and faultless *Vedas* in which the smoke rose up under the provocation of large quantities of ghee poured into the sacrificial fire were performed by you?". The poet compares the achievement of the patron on the battle-field and on the hallow sacrifical sites. A verse in *Paripaatal*[9] gives the following account of (i) each Vedic sacrifice required a presiding god; (ii) it required *pacus* or the animals to be sacrificed (goats); and (iii) the sacrificial fire was big and rose to a great height.

8. Cf. PRN—Verses Nos. 2 and 15.
9. Verse. No. 2 lines (60-70).

Vedic Gods : Most of the Vedic gods are mentioned by name in the Cankam classics. Indra appears to have dominated in the South in the new Aryan divine hagiology for some time until the Siva and Vishnu cults took over. The *Tolkaapiyam* reference to *Ventan* in *Sutra* number 5 of *Porulatikaaram* is interpreted as Indra, the king *par excellence*. This work, reputed to be the earliest Tamil work extant, makes Indra, the god of '*Marutam*'.[10] There is no doubt that the Indra of Tamil Literature is a gift of the *Vedas* to the Tamils. The Tamil had probably their own divine hagiology; and until contradicted, Muruga may be considered a Tamil creation. The confusion about Muruga arises from the development of the cult, possibly at a later time, into the *Subrahmanya* cult. In literature, while giving glimpses into the pure *Muruga* cult in which Muruga is Muruga, the Tamil god highlights Muruga the metamorphosed Subramanya. It will be worthwhile to identify and reconstitute the pure Tamil hagiology. But within the mass of imformation which classics contain, it is more easy to identify the Aryan gods than the Tamil gods, because the process of Aryanisation became complete even so early as two thousand years ago. Tamil customs and practices were modified or rendered obsolete by the overwhelming Aryan forces.

Indra is the chief god of the *Vedas*. In the *Vedas*, he is the god of the gods. Vishnu, Siva, and Brahma have no importance in the *Vedas*. The trinity assumed importance only In the later period with the development of the *Puraanas* and *Aagamas*. It is a shrewd guess that when the Aryanisation of the Tamil country started, the trinity had just then

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Maayon meya kaaturai ulakamum
Seyon meya maivarai ulakamum
Ventan meya teempunal ulakamum
Varunan meya perumanal ulakamum.

The ancient Tamils divided the lands into four regions *viz.*, *mullai* or the pastoral part, *kurinji* or the hilly part, *marutam* or the agricultural part and *neytal* or the littoral part. Each division in the Tamil land had its own presiding deity; for instance, Mayon belonged to the *mullai* tract. Ceyon or Murukan to the hilly tract, Ventan or Indra to the *marutam* tract and Varuna to the *neytal* region.

attained some vogue but the Vedic gods were still dominant. The references to Vishnu either as *'Maayon'* or as *'Tirumaal'* or as one of His manifestations and the reference to Siva as *'Sivaperumaan'* must be attributed to the post-Aryan period of the South. However, it will be interesting to go into the origins of the Tamil Vishnu and Tamil Siva to be sure whether they were not merely North Indian importations or whether they were Tamil gods given the names of Vishnu and Siva after the Aryanisation and merged with the Aryan concepts of Vishnu and Siva. *'Maayon'* and *'Maal'* are beautiful Tamil words not to be derived from the Sanskrit roots but to be considered the name of a Tamil god, later merged into the Aryan Vishnu in the same manner as Muruga got merged into Subrahmanya. *'Maayon'* if proved to be an earlier Tamil version of Vishnu easily converted into the Aryan Vishnu later and if Muruga can be resuscitated from the mass of details mixing up Muruga and Subrahmanya, then we have at least two indigenous Tamil gods, that along with their worshippers became converts to the Aryan cult. The above reflections must be however sustained and borne out by a detailed and scientific study of both the layers in classical Tamil literature—the indigenous and the exotic.

With the impact of Aryanisation becoming pronounced the Vedic hagiology was accepted in toto. Indra headed the list of gods. Naturally, early Tamil literature is replete with Indra stories. Perhaps there existed temples for Indra, Among the Indra stories preserved in classical Tamil Literature is the well-known Indra-Ahalyaa romance culminating in both the erring lovers being cursed by Gautama.[11] Another Indra story relates to Vinata the mother of Garuda getting into captivity under Kadroo as a result of a foolish wager that the tail of the Indra's horse was white. Kadroo, to spite Vinataa, changed the colour of the tail into back. However, the redemption from the captivity could be had by Vinataa

11. PRP—Verse 19 line 50.

getting the *amrta* which Indra had kept in Amaraavati. Vinata procured the *amrta* through her son Garuda, and got her release.[12] A third story relates to Indra protecting the Himalayas.[13] In another rather fantastic reference to Indra in the *Paripaatal*,[14] the details of which are not given here, Indra's *vajra* is mentioned as the origin of Subrahmanya. Indra is described as the possessor of a great bow and the *vajra*.

One of temples of Indra was possibly located in Kaaviri-p-poompattinam which was the centre of great festivities. A number of other Indra temples may have existed, because it looks as if the Indra festival had become one of the universal festivals of the Tamils during the post - Aryan period. The *Cilappatikaaram*, though not acknowledged as Cankam work but with every right to be considered of as much antiquity as many of the works, (*e.g. Pattup-paattu*) gives a detailed description of the Indra festival of the Tamils.[15] Among the Aryans of the North, Indra was a Vedic deity to whom many of the Vedic hymns were addressed. One wonders whether Indra was idolised and worshipped in temples as a deity of a separate cult in Northern India. The Tamil mind evolved a worshippable god out of Indra for more popular purposes than the Northern Aryans. In other words, Indra belonged to the masses in the Tamil country as the recipient of worship, prayers, praises and songs and the centre of feasts and festivals. The North Indian Indra does not appear to have walked out of the pages of the *Vedas*, nor out of the *yaagasaalaas* of Brahmins and kings and mixed with the common folk.

The other gods of the *Vedas* like Varuna, Yama, Agni and Soma also occur in classical Tamil Literature, though not with that importance given to Indra. The *Tolkaapiyam* calls Varuna the god of the sea.[16] Varuna as the god responsible

12. ibid. — Verse 3.
13. ibid. — Verse 9.
14. ibid. — Verse 9.
15. CLP—Canto V
16. TLK *Porulatikaaram—Sutra—5.*

for rain is implied in a number of contexts. The Varuna of the Tamils was the same as the Varuna of the North Indians.

Indra, Yama, Agni and Soma are referred to as '*Naarperum Deyvam*' by the author of the *Tirumurukaarru-p-patai*.[17] The concept of Yama as the impartial dealer of justice was also very well-known to the Tamils. The other name for Yama in early Tamil literature was '*Taruman*' sometimes confused with the owner of the same name among the five Paandavas. Some scholars equate Yama and Koorram as a Tamil synonym for the Sanskrit *Yama*. The commentator Parimelazhakar warns us against the mistake of considering both the terms identical. He says that these two have two different meanings, Yama, meaning the god of Death and Kooram, his messengers or *kinkaras*.[18]

Devas and Asuras : The Vedic Devas and Asuras figure in the Tamil classics rather prominently. The characteristics of the Devas and the Asuras which can be gleaned form the *Vedas* are impressed upon us by Tamil Literature. The Devas are *sattvika*, just and non - interfering. They are for the stability of *Dharma* or righteousness. The Asuras are their opposite. They are destructive, wantonly cruel and against any worthwhile deed. In a sense, they are anti-social and anarchical. The Devas are sometimes referred to as '*Amarar*'.[19] The Tamils knew the practice of maintaining the three fires, one of which was for making offerings to the Devas. As regards the Asuras, they are condemned for their satanic pleasure in spoiling aacrifices performed by the Brahmins. In the *Puranaanooru*[20] there is a story of the Asuras running away with the Sun. The story of the churning of the ocean by Devas and Asuras appears to have caught the imagination of the Tamils. It occurs in a number of places.[21]

17. *Tirumurukarru-p-patai* line 160.
18. PRP Verse No. 3, (commentary).
19. PRN Verse Nos : 38, 55, 62, 99 etc.
20. ibid.—Verse 174.
21. ibid Verse Nos. 182, 392,

The Sun and the Moon : Another Vedic influence that shows up in Tamil Literature is that relating to the Sun and the Moon. One need not labour unnecessarily any theory that would make the Sun and the Moon cults in the Tamil Country the gifts of the Aryans. Both are natural phenomena of daily occurence and an attention to both in wonder, awe and reverence was paid even by the most primitive societies. The Tamils might have advanced even many steps farther than the Vedic Aryans in their development of the Sun and the Moon cults. Tamil life was simple and much of it was lived in open air and not a small number of the *Aham* poems refer to the Sun and the Moon as factors influencing the upsurge of the emotions of the lovers. In fact, the treatment of the seasons is inextricably connected with the psychology of love. The Tamil maiden had the custom of worshipping the crescent moon (*Pirai-Tozhutal*).[2] Thus, the Sun and the Moon cults may have existed in a perfected form before the Aryanisation. What we may therefore indicate here is that the Sun cult was further developed to the extent of separate temples being built for the Sun. The status of a god was attained by the Sun and invocations to the Sun god were not uncommon. The *Cilappatikaaram* which evidently continued an earlier practice begins with an invocation to the Sun, the Moon and the god of rain.

Other Vedic Ideas : The idea of *Rishi* or the performer of penance was among the other ideas that the Tamils appear to have accepted with enthusiasm. The Tamils welcomed the idea of detachment as found in the *Vedas* and the *Rishi* that the *Vedas* speak of as the embodiment of action in detachment must have evoked admiration among the Tamils. It seems to be a fact that the Tamils accepted only '*satva*' among the three '*gunas*'. If the Tamil people should be appropriately characterized with a Sanskrit term, that term is '*satva*' (non-interfering, soft, gentle, human, humane and refined); '*rajas*' and '*tamas*' they abhorred. Naturally the

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2. *Kuruntokai*–Verse No. 307.

Rishi who embodied '*satva*' had an appeal to the Tamil mind. Literature refers to them as '*Irudigal*'. The names of some of the *Rishis* may be identified in the pages of the ancient classics. Without pretending to be final and conclusive one could consider Agastya a name that became very famous in Tamil literature as a descendent of the Agastya known to the *Vedas*.[23] Gautama and Visvaamitra are definitely known to have had popularity in the South along with Agastya. Visvaamitra the *Rishi* of the *Gayatri-mantra* according to some scholars was exiled to the southern region. Sometimes, credit is given to Visvaamitra for having aryanised the South. The sons of Visvaamitra are stated to have married Tamil wives.[24] Gautama the husband of Ahalyaa figures in quite a number of contexts.[25] The idea of renunciation which the *Rishis* embodied was very much developed in the Tamil Country in later times. Tiruvalluvar has a whole chapter on the greatness of those that practice renunciation (*Veettaar Perumai*).[26] The *Kurals* relating to the '*Neettaar*' cannot fail to remind one of the Vedic *Rishis*.

The Vedic influences : (a) The caste system : There is plenty of controversy over the caste - system of Northern

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23 "The successive stages in the development of Agastya legend may be clearly seen from a stndy in the order of the *Rg Veda*, the *Atnarvana Veda*, the *Brhad-devata*, the *Mahabhaarata*, the *Raamaayana*, the *Vavu-puraana* and of the *Matsya-puraana*. Perhaps, the spread of Brahminism in the South by a descendent of the Vedic Agastya may be the basis of these legends.

The legends about Agastya in Tamil literature partly carry on the Northern fables with embeiishments and partly keep a more human standard. A work on Tamil grammar is attributed to him and he is said to be the father of Tamil Agastya is a hallowed name in the Tamil Country heln in reverence more by his legendary deeds than by any solid achievements literary or otherwise".

Vaiyapuri Pillai, S: *History of Tamil Language and Literature*—p.p. 64, 65.

24. Visvaamitra the Rsi of the *Gayatri-mantra* rescued his grand nephew Sunah-sepha from being sacrified by Harisca dra's son Rohita. Visvamitra's fifty sons protested againstt his act and also against th ir father giving Sunab-sepha a position superior to their in the famlly. The Rishi in his anger cursed his sons to become un-aryans. The theory is that the'Dasyus of the South were descended from the exiled sons of Visvaamitra,—Srinivasa Iyengar : *History of Tamils* pp. 19, 20, 31, 49, 59.

25. PRP—Verse 19—lines (50-55).

26. *Kural*—Chapter 4.

India. A few scholars would say that the caste-system originated in the Rig-Vedic period. But the consensus of opinion is that it is post-Rig-Vedic. So far as the Tamil country was concerned, the caste system introduced and accepted as an inevitable corollary to Aryanisation. The Tamil language itself appears to have received no small contribution from the Brahmin Agastya who codified the existing material and also presented the authoritative grammar. The question of the caste-system in the early Tamil country bristles with real difficulties Was the caste - system planted in the Tamil country by an overwhelming horde of Aryans by coercion? Or did the caste-system emerge as a convenient social grouping in the Tamil country as it did in the North? Or did only a few Brahmins migrate to the Tamil Country, before it built up its own separate Brahmin society with this small number as the nucleus? These are questions that can never receive a final answer. If the Brahmins alone had migrated from the North to the South, does it mean that the Kshatriyas, the Vaisyas, and the fourth caste were constituted from the local Tamil population? Or like the Brahmins, did the other three castes also migrate from the North to the South as an Aryan body? It is best not to enter into the investigation of these problems; but there is no doubt that the four castes existed during the classical period in the Tamil Country. Tolkaappiyanaar mentions the four castes specifically. Perhaps, it is true that there are few works in Tamil which do not contain references to the four castes.

There are two ways of tentatively looking at the caste-system in the Tamil country, with the basic unassailable truth that it was a product of Aryanisation. One is to imagine that the idea of caste alone was borrowed from the migrating Aryans and the caste - system took shape among the local population into which the migrating element got merged. Another is to suppose that the first three castes consisted of immigrants from the North and the fourth caste was made up of the agriculturists of the Tamil country. The Soodra of the

North Indian caste - system was a servant of the other castes. The Tamils considered no one so lowly as to be condemned to menial service. Moreover, the caste - system of the South though based on the North Indian system was more democratic; and it was work and not birth that was considered the basis of a person's prestige. Among the poets, we find members of ail the castes and there is nothing of the *Koodas* of Brahminism in the writings of Brahmin poets to distinguish them from the poets of the other castes. The themes are all of the common folk whether handled by Brahmin poets or poets of th. other castes.

The simple social arrangement which the Tamils assimilated into their social structure degenerated into a jungle of social overgrowths that today it is almost impossible to count the number of castes among the Tamils. That has been the story of the North Indian caste system also.

(b) **Influence on literary composition** : The *Vedas* were pure knowledge and not easily assimilable by the common mind. Naturally, the *Brahmanas and Upanishads* came as justifiable vehicles of amplifying the Vedic truths. But even these became hard stuff and the *Itihaasas* seemed to supply real need in the spiritual education of the masses. Tamil poetry had never been godless in the earliest period, but the theme was ever purely spiritual. This I am able to locate among what I have indicated earlier as the indigenous facets of Tamil iife. Unless whole works on gods and angels had disappeared, we are on fairly firm ground when we want to assert that the spiritual themes were outside of the ken of the earliest Tamil poetry. The Aryanisation implied emphasis of the spiritual aspects to a perceptible degree. By the time the Aryan influence spread into the South, the *Upanishads* and the epics had been composed and had become popular in Northern India. The epics were looked upon as *upabrahmanas* magnifying the truths imbedded in the *Vedas*. With the spread of the Vedic influence in the South, naturally the *Upanishads* and the epics also gained

currency in the South. While no Tamil version of the *Vedas* could be attempted for obvious reason, the works believed to elaborate the Vedic truths were rendered into Tamil by Tamil poets. We have evidence of a Tamil *Raamaayanam* belonging to the classical period of many centuries older in point of time than the *Kamba - Raamaayanam*.[27] Whether there really was a *Raamaayanam* in Tamil or not in the classical period, the *Raamaayana* story was most popular with the masses. As for the *Bhaarata* story at least, one *Bhaaratam* of the classical period is known to us, written by Peruntevanaar. The surmise is not far-fetched that there were a few more *Bhaaratams* in Tamil. Purely spiritual or religious themes began to be handled by poets after the Aryanisation. Examples are *Paripaatal*, and *Tirumurukaarruppatai*.

Possibly by the time the Pallavas secured ascendancy over the South, the Tamil country had accepted the *Vedas* as its scripture. But it was only the Brahmins that studied these works and the other castes followed the regulations laid down on the basic of the *Vedas*. It is not to suggest that they gave up their own customs, practices and beliefs in toto. Much of what constituted the essence of the new life had already been developed independently and lived by the Tamils and the adjustment they had to make was not difficult. The only controversial element was performance of the sacrifices, and thanks to the intensive campaigns of the Jains and the Buddhists, sacrifices had almost disappeared in Northern India by the time the Aryan influence penetrated the South. Even in the South, while sacrifices were no doubt performed by kings they were never part of the life led by the common people. Sacrifices were costly affairs and kings performed them for their publicity value, possibly also for what they believed to be the true purposes of such practices.

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27. This surmise is not only borne out by the large number of referenees to the *Raamayana* incidents in the Cankam classics, but also by the general belief among the scholars that the *Raamaayana* story had been hanbled by many poets before Kamban who eventually emerged as the Tamil *Raamaayanam*-poet *par excellance*.

That the *Vedas* had secured ascendancy in the South can be proved in many ways. The glory of the *Tirukkural* was according to many of the contemporary poets the *'Tami Marai'*[28] Without entering into any controversy about the *Kural*, it may be safely asserted that it synthesized the indigenous and the exotic elements of Tamil culture on the true foundation of Tamil ideas and beliefs. The later Naayanmaars and Aazhvaars are content to describe their compositions as Tamil expositions of Vedic truths.

Conclusion: What did the Aryanisation mean to the Tamil Country? No doubt, it gave the caste-system, the *Vedas*, the North Indian gods and the Sanskrit language. Emotionally, it meant very little. For one thing the Aryanisation of the Tamils was not the same as civilising a primitive people. There was already a culture that was nothing inferior to the new culture. Long before the Aryanisation, the Tamils had developed a great culture that possibly started getting spread out until the Aryan culture appeared as its rival. The Dravidian influence is seen in dozens of Indian dialects and languages. The geographical conspectus of the Dravidian influence includes the whole of the region south of the Vindhyas, parts of Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Bihar, Bengal and Baluchistan.[29] Therefore, when the Aryan influence came into the Tamil Country it was not grabbed as something spectacular. The Tamils found that many of the ingredients of the Aryan culture were in tune with their own culture, and therefore, accepted them. The Tamil mind had always the genius of assimilating the best of other cultures. Aryanisation was not a cultural invasion of the Tamil but a cultural assimilation of what was agreeable in the foreign culture by the Tamils. At the same time the Tamils were able to maintain their cultural identity throughout. It should be the business of future Tamil research to identify the pure ingredients of Tamil culture to show that they were nothing inferior to any culture which the Tamils willingly assimilated.

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28. *Tiruvalluva-malai*—Verse Nos.: 2, 4,15,18, 24, 32, 37, 42, 43 and 44.
29. Vaiyapuri Pillai, S: *History of Tamil Language and Literature*—P. 1.

14. MUTTOLLAAYIRAM—A STUDY*

The Sources of this Work: In the form in which it was first presented by its talented author the *Muttollaayiram* is a lost work to us. Fragments of the work totalling 108 verses could be found in a collection (rather than an anthology) of *Puram* verses brought to light and published by the University of Madras under the eminent editorship of Prof. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai. The collection known by name of *Pura-t-tirattu* appears to be a work of the post - Chola epoch and according to Prof. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai, a 15th century product. We are not at the moment concerned with the date of the *Pura-t-tirattu* and we shall accept the professor's guess in this regard. But what is of importance is that the *Pura-t-tirattu* is the only source of all the available verses of the *Muttollaayiram* distributed over the different section of the collection as a *Puram* presentation. The following table gives the distribution :

Puram classification in *Pura-t-tirattu*		No. of verses of *Muttollaayiram*
Arrattu-p-paal		1
Porut-paal		43
Kammattu-p-paal		65
	Total	109

★ Introduction to *Muttollaayira Vilakkam* (1964)

The distribution under the sub-heads is as follows:

Arattu-p-paal

1.	Katavul vaazhttu	1
	Porut-paal	
2.	Naatu	3
3.	Nakar	3
4.	Pakai-p-pulam Pazhittal	5
5.	Tirai	4
6.	Yeyil Kotal	1
7.	Kutirai Maram	1
8.	Yaanai Maram	10
9.	Kalam	5
10.	Venri	2
11.	Pukazh	10
	Kaamattu-p-paal	
12.	Kaikkilai	65
		109

In the fragments extant one verse is available for Arattu-p-paal, 43 verses for Porut-paal and 65 verses for Kaamattu-p-paal. The *Pura-t-tirattu* is patterned after the *Tirukkural* in its threefold classification as Aram (*Dharma*) Porul (*Arta*) and Inpam (*Kaama*) which a few other works like the *Naalatiyaar* have also adopted. But one cannot be certain about the pattern of the original *Muttollaayiram* except that it was in three parts, each devoted to one sovereign power of the Tamil country. Within this threefold division of Paantiyan, Chozhan and Ceran, we are not aware what classification was adopted in the arrangement of the verses in each division. If the arrangement in the *Pura-t-tirattu* were any guidance, the original *Muttollaayiram* must have been divided into three major parts with sub-headings under each of the *Puram* and *Akam* motifs selected.

Barring the *Purat-t-tirattu* no other source has so far been discovered either to add to the number of verses extant or to

present the book in full. A few variations in reading are available beyond those found in *Pura-t-tirattu*. In view of the excellence of the work as a piece of literature, and the fact that it had survived till the post-Chozha period to secure acceptance as material for inclusion in an anthology of representative works, it may be hoped that labours in the direction of seeking out the original in tact will be rewarded with success. Until then, the fragments of the work should be our only material to constitute a separate book with the original title.

Some of the *Muttollaayiram* verses are found in a number of commentaries in Tamil. But these verses do not add to the *Pura-t-tirattu* selections in any manner except in variation of readings in respect of a few verses. The invocatory verse[1] of this work is quoted by Camaya Tivaakara Munivar in his commentary on *Neelakesi Teruttu*. Naccinaar-k-kiniyar in his commentary on the Porulatikaaram of *Tolkaapiyam* has quoted verses 23,67,68,94 and 96. Peraasiriyar, another commentator of *Tolkaappiyam*, has used vorses 39,69 and 74 as illustrations. Atiyaar-k-ku Nallaar in his commentary on *Cila-p-patikaaram* has quoted verse 39 to explain a particular line. In the ozhipiyal of *Yaapparunkala virutti*, verse 34 and 66 have been selected for illustrating two concepts in grammar.

Though these stray verses used for illustrative purposes by commentators have only duplication value, however, a few variations in readings are available thanks to these. These are given in the footnotes along with the other readings available in the Manuscripts of the *Pura-t-tirattu* extant. The number of verses that can be considered genuine would be 108 if we are to exclude verses 1397 and 1474 in the *Pura-t-tirattu*. The Editor of the *Pura-t-tirattu* himself questions the genuineness of verse 1474. As regards verse 1397 it is not accepted. as genuine by Prof. M. Raghava Iyengar in whose edition of the *Muttollaayiram* it has been left out. In the other edition

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1. Verse—1.

of the work by Thiru N. Sethuraghunathan also this verse has been rejected as spurious. The verse under reference is as follows:

இ[ள]ங்களி [றொ]ன்ற மடப்பிடி சார
லி[ல]ங்கருவி நீராற் றெளி[த்தும்]—நலங்கிளர்வேற்
றுன்னரும்போர்க் கோதை தொடா[அன்] செருக்கின
மன்னர் மதிலாய வென்று.

(பா.வே) 1. இருங்களி: 5. லிருங்கருவி: 11-12. துடா செருக்கின: இறுதியடி' மன்னர் புறங்கணித்த வெண்மதிலாய வென்று' எனக் காணப்படுகின்றது.

This could be a genuine verse of the original without the mistakes of prosody and verbal interpolations in which it abounds in its present form. Moreover, it is full of gaps filled in by the Editor within brackets. A portion of the verse from *Perumporul* occurring immediately after the *Muttollaayiram* excerpt has also got mixed up with the *Muttollaayiram* verse and takes away from its purity.[2] Therefore this verse has been left out in this edition also.

Reverting to verse 1474 of the *Purra-t-tirattu* there is no doubt it reaches the level of excellence which distinguishes the other verses, but as its source is not specially mentioned in the original Manuscript, there is the hesitancy to accept it as a *Muttollaayiram* verse. Here is the verse:

திறலொடு தீதுருநதிப பூழிய னல்லன்
மறலொடு மைந்து தருக்கிப்—பிறரொருவர்
தென்ன னிளங்கோத் திருமால் வழுதிமுன்
மன்னர்யார் மாறேற் பவர்.

(பா. வே.) 3. பூமிய:

This verse has to go under the classification Pukazh or Fame in *Porut-paal*. It should be included in the division of Paantiyan and obviously it sings the praise of the Paantiyan monarchy.

Thiru N. Sethuraghunathan has added 22 more verses to the *Purat-ttirattu* number in his edition. He has himself

2 'புறங்கணித்த வெண்' என்பது அடுத்த செய்யுளில் (1398) 11, 12-ஆம் சீர்கள்— From the footnotes of *Pura-t-tirattu*

acknowledged in his masterly preface that the only criterion of inclusion of these additional verses in their resemblance to the genuine ones. These 22 verses were taken from various commentaries as they resembled *Muttollaayiram* verses. But the authorship of their original sources was not indicated by the Editor. It is a very interesting approach though scientifically it is open to the criticism of lack of authenticity. In fairness to Thiru N. Sethuraghunathan most of the 22 verses are of high level of excellence and could easily be fitted in. However, in this edition those verses have been excluded pending establishment of their veracity.

The probable period of its composition : The problem of fixing the probable date of the work gets more complicated than it would have been had it been a mere lack of mention of the epoch as in most other works by the following factors :

(i) While it purports to be a high class panegyric it combining *Akam* and *Puram* elements in its artistry it just leaves the student with the need to guess who the appropriate recipients of the praises could have been.

(ii) The authorship is also anybody's guess. There is no doubt that the work must have been produced by a master-mind fit to be ranked with any of the authors of the *Akanaanooru* and *Puranaanooru*. It may also be classified with ample justification that it is the best application of many *Akam* and *Puram* motifs evolved by the Tamil grammarians of the classical age, particularly Tolkaappiyanaar.

(iii) If the *Paayiram* (Preface) of the work had been saved, it would perhaps have thrown at least indirect light.

(iv) The invocatory part of the work too helps very little, because only one verse has beec saved and like the first stanza of *Tirukkural* it poses difficult question even as to the true religion of the author,

though tentatively the belief has been hazarded that he must have been a follower of *Saivism*. This belief is the basis of the separate section on the religion of *Muttollaayiram*.

Howevcr, the style and the composition of the work leave very little doubt as to its being a product of the pre-Pallavan period. The *Venpaa* metre of the classical age is patent, and can be easily distinguished from the more sophisticated *Venpaa* of later times, partaking not infrequently of the character of light folk verses, sacrificing profundity of wisdom and meaning at the altar of *Mōnai* (alliteration) and *Etukai* (rhyme). The genuine imprint of the classical style can be easily identified in every one of the verses. On grounds of close literary identity with the works of the last Cankam the work has to be assigned to a pre-Pallavan period. It is to be noted that there is no reference to any Pallavan in the work.

Let us take the other pieces of internal evidence into consideration. The work is desigded as an exposition of *Akam* and *Puram* motifs within a series of panegyrics on the three crowned heads of the Tamil country. It was only in the pre-Pallavan age, particularly in the age of the last Cankam, that the three dominions existed side by side as three jewels on the ornament of Tamizhakam. The early literature very often refers to the three crowned heads together, in fact to the extent of its becoming a by-word '*Mutiyutai mooventar*'. It was a unique political co-existence in which even if there were political differences, certain objections became the common objectives of all the monarchies. Tamil poets had some kind of a diplomatic immunity in exercise of which they moved from kingdom to kingdom seeking royal patronage. Even duriug times of war, this immunity was not in any way affected. If anything, it enablcd them to assume the role of emissaries of peace. The three crowned heads in combination had been the theme of many verses of the Cankam age

It was not improper for a poet to owe allegiance and express gratitude to all the three monarchs, whatever was his nationality in the modern sense.

The *Muttollaayiram* is perhaps the single longest of the works dedicated to the three crowned heads on the basis of equal respect and regard for each; obviously the author must have enjoyed the patronage of the three rulers. The political trinity of the Tamil country ceased to exist in that situation of glorious co-existence after the Pallavan rule had been established.

The "*trinity*" concept in Tamil politics was very much more than the mere accident of three different dynasties sitting on three different thones in three different capitals. There were certain common purposes which all the three strove to achieve; and certain traditions had been developed by which politics was subordinated to higher goals. For instance each of the three rulers vied with the others in promoting Tamil learning. All the three worked to preserve the cultural individuality expressed by the term '*Tamizhakam*' which, though patently a geographical concept, signified the cultural uniqueness of the region presided over by them.

The *Muttollaayiram* does not mention the names of kings directly. The Paantiya, the Chozha and the Cera are to be recognised by the references to the special characteristics of the country and by their honorific titles. However, there is one name which while normally to be understood as a general title applicable to all the early Chozhas was also the name of a Chozha king. Verse No. 87 refers to Nalankilli. It is well known that there was a Chozha king by name Nalankilli and instead of taking Nalankilli as a title of every Chozha king it will be better to consider it as the name of a king. Prof. Srinivasa Iyengar places Nalankilli after Karikaalan. He would guess that Nalankilli was the immediate successor of Karikaalan. Here is a verse of Kovoor kizhaar in praise of Nalankilli. "As amongst the objects of human life wealth and

pleasure come after *dharma*. So the two umbrellas, those of the Ceran and the Paantiyan, come after your single umbrella. Desiring that your fame should rise high like the white moon you are spending all your time in military camps. Your elephants, the tips of whose tusks have been blunted by battering the fort walls of your enemies, are having no rest. Your soldiers who were the bracelets of heroes are always eager for war do not hesitate to march to the enemies' distant territories situated in the middle forests. Your horses first stay in the battle fields where the war festival is celebrated and so from the eastern ocean right round till the white waves of the western ocean wash their hoofs. The kings of the northern region are watching with sleepless eyes and are trembling with fear."[3]

Nalankilli had perhaps to be fighting throughout his reign. He must have been ruling for many years, with Kaaviri-p-poompattinam as his capital as is evident from *Puram* verse 30. Nalankilli's period was a period of dual monarchy in the Chozha country, the capital of the second kingdom being Uraiyoor. One is not quite certain if Nalankilli had to reside in Kaaviri-p-poompattinam having lost Uraiyoor to Netunkilli or if both Netunkilli and he were occupying two different thrones in two different capitals. It is clear that Nalankilli had to fight against Netunkilli. Maybe he could recover or or annex (whichever was the case) Uraiyoor, and give it the status of primary capital. The *Muttollaayiram* mentions Urantai (Uraiyoor) as the Chozha capital, and the inference is that Nalankilli took it from Netunkilli.

The titles of the Chozha king mentioned in the work are Kokkilli, Cempian, Urantaiyaar-k-ko, Punal Naatan and Kaavirineer Naatan. These titles while generally applicable to all the early Chozhas seem to refer to Nalankilli in particular. Nalankilli is the subject matter of a larger number of verses in the *Puram* than most otherChozha rulers exceptKarikaalan.[4]

3. *Puram*–31.
4. He is praised in 14 verses.

The verses give the followin information about him: He was a great poet. He destroyed the seven walls of the Paantiyan kingdom and planted his tiger-banner. He besieged and took Uraiyoor which had been in the possession of a kinsman of his. He was the elder brother of Maavalattaan. His other names were Cetcenni, Putpakai and Tervenkilli. His enemy was Netunkilli. Those who sang in his praise were Uraiyoor Mutukkannan Caattanaar, Kovoor-k-kizhar and Alattoor-k-kizhar.[5]

The date of Nalankilli has to be fixed after Karikaalan whose date itself is still wrapped in controversy; but allowing some margin for the sake of a liberal estimate of his age Nalankilli may be ascribed to the third century A.D. This would roughly correspond to the period immediately after the Cankam age.

That the *Muttollaayiram* could have been a Cankam work no one can doubt if pattern and literary excellence should have been the criteria. But in the traditional list of Cankam works the work is not mentioned. Of course, the traditional list itself is still not invested with any historicity. Those who listed certain works as Cankam works must have depended upon a tradition handed down from generation to genernation.[6] The absence of *Muttollaayiram* in these lists may indicate that at the time the tradition took shape *Muttollaayiram* had not been either written or was not considered of a standard to be mentioned with the other works. The *Muttollaayiram* might have been a product of the late third Cankam period, but not given the status of a Cankam work. It is very difficult to fix the exact date of either Nalankilli or *Muttollaayiram*. And all that is possible is a shrewd guess that the work must have been composed about the third century A. D., and that in all probability the Chozha king who patronised the poet was Nalankilli.

Other internal evidences also point to the same belief. The Pallavan period was one of great religious upheaval, and

5. *Puram*—27 to 33.
6. *Iraiyanaar Kalaviyal*—1. Commentary. p. 57.

the Aazhvasrs and the Naayanmaars had created a revolution in Tamil poetry. The predominantly nature-based erotic poetry of the earlier age taking its motifs from the realities of life was substituted by purely religious poetry of a mystic nature. The history of Tamil poetry from the Pallavan period is the story of how religion became the dominant motive force in poetry. The *Muttollaayiram* is far away from the mysticism of the poetry of the Pallavan and the post-Pallavan epochs. It is not to say that religion had no place in early poetry, but the religion of later poetry was more complex, highly denominational and based on the whole universe which the *Agamas* had unfolded. In contrast, earlier poetry spoke of gods worshipped by the common folk without the gods being too much involvdd in *Puraanic* and other legends. The *Muttollaayiram* mentions only the Maayon, the Seyon and Siva.[7] The religion of the period was the simple faith in an all-pervading god. There are only a few references to *Puraanic* anecdotes, but they would seem to be the first exotic influences on the simple Tamil religion and their numbers were not so many as to bewilder the readers. But in the post-Cankam or in the Pallavan age after the Sanskritic influences became so pronounced as to dilute the true elements of Tamil culture. Tamil literature began to reflect those influences as the result of which Tamil life itself was greatly affected. Thus literature and life became interrelated. Therefore, it is easy to separate the literature of the post-Cankam age and that of the Cankam age. The *Muttollaayiram* is far from mystical. Religious doctrines do not overwhelm or dominate the work. Therefore, it can be asserted that the *Muttollaayiram* is a work of the period immediately following the third Caukam if not of the last Cankam period itself.

Excepting Nalankilli no other historical king is mentioned. Kokkotai is another name found in the work and there is no doubt that it is a Cera name, but it is not possible to identify the Cera king with this alias. A Kokkotai is in the

7. Verse—18, 19, 20

list furnished by Thiru N. Sivaraja Pillai and assigned to the second century A.D.[8] Without trying to be final on the identification of the three patrons of the author of the poem, we have discussed the question elsewhere.

From another angle related to internal evidence scholars may be inclined to assign the work to the fifth or the sixth century A. D. Some grammarians see in the use of the 'yel' terminal in a compound word like 'azhyaanel' 'taanel' etc., that it was definitely a later grammatical development, because in the trully classical anthologies this 'yel' subjuntive suffix is not found. Again the mention of the special names of a horse belonging to the later Paantiyas, namely, '*Kanavattam*' and that of the later Chozha '*Paatalam*' would lead one to accept a later date to this work. But the grammatical convention referred to might have been initiated much earlier or by the author of the *Muttollaayiram* himself. The influence of the *Muttollaayiram* can be distinctly seen in the works of Periyaazhvaar, Aantaal and Tiruttakka Tevar. As regards the internal evidence furnished by the names of the horse it is not a very serious problem because one is not quite sure when '*Kanavattam*' and '*Paatalam*' really originated and the surmise is not farfetched that we have only the later use of these two special concepts while in truth they might have been evolved centuries earlier, a point not corroborated because of the absence of all the early works except the *Muttollaayiram* using them.

The probable length of the work : The problem as to the length of the work appears the easiest because of the seemingly self-explanatory character of the title. *Muttollaayiram* literally means 'three nine hundreds.' It is simple arithmetic that three nine hundreds make two thousand seven hundred. Therefore, the *Muttollaayiram* must have contained 2700 verses in three parts of 900 each. But the problem is not so simple, as scholars have raised interesting issues on the arithmetical

8. Sivaraja Pillai, K. N. *The Chronology of the Early Tamils.*

import of the title itself: Is it three nine hundreds, or is it nine hundred on three subjects? The '*Mut*' prefix meaning '*Moonru*' or 'three' may go immediately with '*Tollaayiram*' as such a mathematical convention was quite common in poetical composition. For example, '*Patthotaaru-nuraayiram*' (பத்தொடாறு நூறாயிரம்).[9] The hymns of the Naalaayiram are full of such poetical handling of arithmatic, and the end of each decad has an arithmetical computation in such a form.

There are, however, those that belive that the work must have contained only nine hundred verses, possibly three hundred to each one of the crowned heads. Thiru N. Sethuraghunathan is the best representative of this point of view. The 'three' before 'nine hundred' refers to the Paantiyan, Chozhan and Ceran. This view receives good sustenance from a *sutra* whose substance is as follows:

> "An en ceyyul (a poem named with reference to the number of its verses) is a poem in which the glory of a hero is sung in verses numbering from ten to one thousand."[10]

As the commentary of the *sutra* defines the word '*ennale*' (எண்ணாலே) as numbering from ten to one thousand evidently on an established convention, no *en ceyyul* was normally longer than 1000 verses. Viewed in this light the *Muttollaayiram* must have been a poem in 900 verses only and not 2700 verses. Any further doubt in this regard is removed by an explicit statement in the commentary in which *Muttollaayiram* is mentioned by name as an example of an *en eeyyul*.[11] Another poem of the same length was called *Arumpaai-t-tollaayiram* (அரும்பைத் தொள்ளாயிரம்).

As between the two views, one cannot choose with any assurance of being precise. But in the present state of our knowleage it seems wise to accept the criterion furnished by

9. *Kalinkattu-p-parani*—198.
10. *Ilakhana Vilakkam*—477 and its commentary.
11. *Ibid*—commentary.

the *sutra* referred to already and accept the position that the original poem was in 900 verses. Apart from the need to be fortified by the clear data for postulating any definite theory the *Muttollaayiram* might not have been such a voluminous work. If it had been so, it would have been preserved in the memory of the succession of generations that followed its composition in a much better manner than is its present lot. Many times the present 108 or 109 verses could have been salvaged if the work had been in 2700 verses.

To conclude this section, it seems proper to interpret the the title as the 900 verses in praise of the three crowned kings the *'Moonru'* referring to the Paantiyan, Chozhan and Ceran and not multiplying nine hundred.

The question of Authorship: The name of the author is not mentioned either within the body of the work as it is available, or by the commentators who have made use of this work for illustrative purposes. There are, however, two or three hints about the identity of the author. First, he may have been a saivite by religion;[12] second, he was a very good student of the classics like *Tolkaappiyam* and *Tirukkural;* third, he lived amidst the realities of the epoch in whieh the ideals of marriage portrayed in *Akam* works were not mere figments of poetic imagination, but integral aspects of the social situation. From these the authorship may be guessed as associable with a great poet, possibly one who is already known by name through his other works. A comparison of the style of this work with some of the Cankam works is one way of identifying the author. But no one has so far attempted this kind of identification.

Thiru N. Senthuraghunathan, however, would see similarities between the characteristics of Nakkeerateva Naayanaar's poetry and those of the *Muttollaayiram* in his very learned discussion of this question of authorship. He leads us to the belief that Nakkeerateva Naayanaar might

12. Votse—1.

himself have been the author of *Muttollaayiram*. Nakkeerateva Naayanaar was the author of *Kailaipaati Antaadi-Kalattipaati Antaadi* and *Tiru-iynkoymalai Ezhupatu*. The learned scholar thinks that Nakkeerateva Naayanaar's genius shows itself to a little extent in these two small works and the *Muttollaayiram* must have been the fruit of his maturity.[13]

We have nothing to say against the logic of the scholar's discussion. As he has stated, it is not uncommon for poets in their mature major works to write elaborately on themes which they have handled in a perfunctory manner in their minor works. But it is not scientific to identify the author of a major work purely by the identity of thinking and verbal expression. The parallelisms between the *Muttollaayiram* and the minor works of Nakkeerateva Naayanaar in thought and expression cannot be matters of dispute. But Nakkeerateva Naayanaar who was a later - day worthy might have been deeply influenced by the *Muttollaayiram* and the identity referred to above must have been the product of such influence.

At present certain clues alone could be provided for further research in regard to the question of authorship. The following basic axioms must be accepted:

(i) The *Muttollaayiram* was not far removed from the third Cankam period.

(ii) It is not improbable that the *Muttollaayiram* was a product of the Cankam period.

(iii) The author had been brought up in the best literary conventions of the Cankam age.

(iv) The literary motifs of the *Muttollaayiram* stand apart from the over-sophisticated complex motifs of the Pallavan and the post-Pallavan epochs.

(v) The social and religious ideas and conventions detailed in the work clearly belong to the pre-Pallavan age.

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13. *Muttollaayiram* (Thiru N. Sethuraghunathan's Edition)-Introduction p. 22.

The author may be identified from among the well-known luminaries of the period in question. But the temptation to shrewed guessing should be suppressed at all cost. Until more verses are discovered and more direct evidence in regard of authorship available, no surmise must be attempted. The possible lines on which such a surmise can be made are given here. The *Puranaanooru* contains more than a dozen verses on Nalankilli by poets like Uraiyoor Mutukkannan Caattanaar, Kovoor-k-kizhaar and Aalattoor-k-kizhaar. Strangely enough, the ***Muttollaayiram*** mentions only one king by name and that is Nalankilli. A comparison of the ideas in the verses specially in respect of the military valour of Nalankilli, his cavalry and his elephantry with the eulogistic verses of the *Muttollaayiram* would easily lead one to associate *Muttollaayiram* with one of the authors of the *Puranaanooru* verses mentioned already. But this superficial identification is bound to lead to an unending controversy. The *Muttollaayiram* is in *Venpaa* metre of four lines for each verse. The *Puram* verses are all in *Aasiriyappaa* metre with no fixed number of lines. Though the *Venpaa* was also among the four classical patterns,[14] it is highly risky to simplify thinking on authorship by making one of the panegyrists of Nalankilli the author of the *Muttollaayiram.* These consideration prompt us to leave the question of authorship open.

Historical and political information in the work : It is a unique work on the three crowned heads by the same author composed according to well-defined literary conventions of panegyric poetry. From the verses available eleven themes have been handled in respect of each king. May be the list is not exhaustive and a few more themes originally handled by the author have been lost to us. The following tabular column gives the themes available in respect of each monarchy :

14. They are *Venpaa, Aasiriyappaa Kalippaa* and *Vancippaa* (vide - *Yaap parunkala-k-kaarikai*—21.)

Serial No. (1)	Themes (2)	Paantiyan (3)	Cozhan (4)	Ceran (5)
1	Naatu (Dominion)	1	1	1
2	Nakar (Capital city)	1	1	1
3	Tirai (Tribute by vassals)	2	1	1
4	Eyil kotal (Taking the fort)	1	—	—
5	Kutirai Maram (Cavalry)	1	—	—
6	Yaanai Maram (Elephantry)	4	4	1
7	Kalam (Battle-field)	2	1	1
8	Pakai-p-pulam Pazhittal (Fool-hardiness of the enemy censured)	2	1	2
9	Venri (Victory)	2	—	—
10	Pukazh (Fame)	6	2	2
11	Kaikkilai (One-sided love)	34	19	12
	Total ...	56	30	21

N.B. :—The numbers under columns 3, 4 and 5 refer to the number of verses.

The concepts mentioned above have distinct meanings in the culture of the ancient Tamils. It is perhaps worth our while to explain each concept :

Naatu : This is a conventional approach to the treatment of the country under the rule of the hero. The description of the country as a literary convention was not unknown to many other literatures including Sanskrit, but Tamil literature has this to reveal : that among the themes most intimately to be associated with royal hero, a description of the countries' special features and prosperous situation is the most indispensable. We shall be presently going into the characteristics of the three countries as furnished by the *Muttollaayiram*.

Nakar : Closely connected with the country is its capital. The theme of the capital was also common to other literatures. There are other works of the Tamil classical age dealing with the three capital cities. The *Pattina-p-paalai* is

completely devoted to Kaaviri - p - poom pattinam. The *Maturai-k-kaanci* is literally a song of Maturai, though purporting to be an eulogy on Netuncezhiyan it is in fact a detailed description of the capital city. The Cera capital has no separate poem, but its glories have been sung in a nnmber of works. The glory of the capital in the Tamil literary convention symbolised justice, peace, prosperity and happiness.

Tirai : The practice of paying a tribute to the overlord was well-known in the Tamil country. '*Tirai*' and '*Kappam*' are pure Tamil concepts. This should indicate an independent evolution of the practice in the Tamil country. The system of levying a tribute was a civilised approach to the treatment of the vanquished by the victorious. Wholesale annexation of territories was resorted to as a political expediency only if the continuation of the rule of the vanquished enemy should spell danger to the sovereignity of the victor. But where the domineering king asserted his might to ensure subordination of lesser rulers the sovereign was content to leave the lesser rulers alone if they would agree to paying a tribute.

Eyil kotal : The practice of capturing the enemy fortress was a universal antecedent to a major conflict. The ideal method in literary convention in this regard is for a king to strike terror in the enemy and make him flee by the noise of the war drum without there being any necessity for the shedding of blood.

Kutirai Maram : The techniques of the cavalry in action are signified by this concept.

Yaanai Maram : The action of the tuskers in battles must have kindled poetic imagination to the extent of its becoming a popular motif in *Puram* poetry dealing with kings.

Kalam : It is the battle field. The battle fields were to the Tamils places of great inspiration. The weird, bloody chaos which is ordinarily associated with a battlefield is not

what classical Tamil poetry would say of a battle field. It was where true heroism and chivalry were evidenced in unmistakable terms by the gushing wounds on the breasts of the warriors. It was where the highest ethics of war would be illustrated by the postures of the dead. The battlefield was developed into a favourite theme fit for lengthy treatment only from the nucleus of this classical motif. The later *Parani* whose best example is the *Kalinkattu-p-parani* of Jayankontaan was a poem of lament, but a song of victory. The *Parani* idea is to be traced to this early literary convention.

Pakai-p-pulam Pazhittal : This is by way of impressing on the obstinate vassals the consequences of insubordination and defaulting in the payment of tributes.

Venri : This is the achievement of the ultimate goal of fighting. Victory in its true sense in Tamil was not the fulfilment of a spirit of revenge. It was not sense of relief as a result of the destruction of the foe. It was a realization that the war had been just, that clean methods of warfare pursued and the ethics of war had not been transgressed. Heroism was not restricted in its application to the deeds of one's own side. A heroic act of the enemy soldier was admired as well as that of a soldier one's own side.[15] *Venri* or *Verri* was in a sense the evaluation of how the goal had been attained.

Pukazh : The fame of a king is assessed with reference to his paraphernalia and his royal symbols like the flower he wore.

Kaikkilai : The introduction of *kaikkilai*, patently *Akam* motif, has been very cleverly done by the author of *Muttollaayiram* perhaps to subserve two purposes: One, to provide himself scope for showing his competence in handling the minutiae of *Akam* poetry; another is to link the *Puram* concept of *Pukazh* with an apparently unrelated *Akam* motif. *Kaikkilai* is the emotional condition attendant on unrecipro-

15. Verse—13.

cated love. The victims to this condition have an escape technique in giving oral expression to their love and also their true admiration of the objects of their love. The intention is not to make such an expression to lead to a union through wedlock with the beloved. It is just to remove a load from the mind.

All the themes explained above can be located in the *Tolkaappiyam*. That the author of the work must have been a good student of *Tolkaappiyam* cannot be disputed. The *Tolkaappiyam* motifs relating to *Puram* have been elaborated and explained in a number of later day grammarians, but the best codification of these motifs seems to be contained in the *Pura-p-porul Venpaa Maalai* of Ayyanaaritanaar reputedly a descendant of the Ceras. Those who classified the verses of *Puranaanooru*, *Tirukkural* and *Cila-p-patikaaram* by linking them with *Puram* motifs wherever appropriate, were guided by the *Pura-p-porul Venpaa Maalai*. It is not improbable that the *Muttollaayiram* too drew on the *Pura-p-porul Venpaa Maalai* for the selection of the motifs in their relevance to a praise of the three crowned heads.

Puram is such a comprehensive connotation even in its application to the activities of the royalty and the ten motifs excluding *kaikkilai* extant could not be considered as the only ones selected by the author. We are not also quite sure if the original work contained divisions on the basis of the different *Puram* motifs with equal number of verses in each as in *Tirukkural* or *Naalatiyaar*. There is every room to guess that the work was more *Akam* in character than *Puram* and as it was intended only to sing the praises of the three monarchies the *Puram* motifs had been pressed into service, monarchy itself being *Puram* theme *par excellence*. The emphasis is on the *Akam* feature. It reflects the genius of the artistry of the poet that a *Puram* theme could be made to subserve the purposes of *Akam* presentation. There can be no disputing the point that the best part of the work is *kaikkilai*.

Now to the historical and political value of the poem. The monarchies celebrated in the poem were the first great

monarchies in the Tamil country which substituted the petty chieftaincies and paved the way for the later day imperialistic pattern in the Tamil country. Each of these monarchies established its sway over distinct parts of the Tamil Nadu, named after each for at least three hundred or four hundred years. Thiru. K. N. Sivaraja Pillai whose excellent thesis "The *Chronology of the Early Tamils*" has been unfortunately treated as of little value for purposes of research has taken the chronology of the early Chozhas from 50 B.C. to 200 A.D-from Veliyan Tittan the conqueror of Uraiyoor to Ko-c-Cenkanaan. The Paantiyan chronology according to him is from 1 A.D. to 175 A. D.—from Netuncezhiyan—I to Ukkira-p-peruvazhuti. The Cera chronology extends from 25 B.C. to 200 A. D. If Thiru K. N. Sivaraja Pillai were to be our final authority, a beautiful synchronism can be established and even a provisional theory as to the identity of the patrons of the poet could be hazarded. Be it understood that this discussion in no way alters the position earlier taken as to the question of identity of the patrons. All that is attempted here is the presentation of the interesting point of view of scholarly historian.

We have earlier referred to the fact that only one ruler is mentioned by name viz Nalankilli. In trying to fix the date of Nalankilli we placed him after Karikaalan. The date of Karikaalan is variously stated and the question of the age of last Cankam itself is still awaiting its correct answer. But the consensus is in favour of a second century date for Karikaalan. On this basis we assigned Nalankilli to the third century A. D. providing for the rulers between Karikaalan and Nalankilli. This must be understood to be purely tentative. It admits of supercession by more sustainable solutions. In the light of this situation we are permitting ourselves to show that the tables of Thiru K. N. Sivaraja Pillai provide a plausible chronological synchronism which makes the question of the date of the *Muttollaayiram* also a very simple one.

In the tables of Thiru Pillai there is no chronological gap or genealogical confusion. Veliyan-Tiittan, the first Chozha

ruler is succeeded by Tittan-Veliyan, Muti-t-talai Ko-p-perunar killi, Karikaalan I, Velpahta Takkai Perunarkilli and Uruva-p-pahter Ilancet-cenni one after another accounting for 125 years. In 75 A.D. Karikaalan-II or the famous Karikaalan of the early period ascends the throne. His son is Nalankilli[1] who ruled between 100 and 125 A.D.

Now to the Paantiyan chronology and genealogy as per Thiru Pillai's tables. Netunter-c-Cezhiyan begins his rule in 1 A. D. and is succeeded by Poota-p-paantiyan, Pasumpoon Paantiyan and Palyaagsaalai Mutukutumi-p-peru vazhuti one after another accounting for 100 years. 100 to 125 A. D. is the period of Talaiyaalankaanattu-c-ceruvenra Netuncezhiyan.

The *Muttollaayiram* speaks of a Paantiyan of great prowess; and among the early Paantiyas the hero of Talaiyaa-lankaanam is the best known and the most celebrated. In fact, he is the Cezhiyan *par excellence*. The *Muttollaayiram* uses names like Tennan, Panjayan, Maaran, Vazhuti and Cezhiyan to refer to the Paantiyan. It is easy to make Nalankilli and Netun-cezhiyan contemporaries.

However, the Cera chronology is a little troublesome though the genealogy is highly helpful. A Cera king by name Ko-k-kotai did rule in the early period though he cannot be assigned a definite date. After Ilanceral Irumporai who is fitted into the genealogical table, five Cera rulers are just listed one after another possibly as suited the imagination of Thiru Pillai. Ko k-kotai is assigned to a period between 150 and 175 A.D. It might well be that he was a successor of Ilanceal Irumporai. Perhaps with the full data in our possession it would have been possible to establish a chronological synchronism among the three rulers Nalankilli, Netun-cezhiyan and Ko-k-kotai. But even in the present material of Thiru Pillai's tables there is enough for the surmise that the *Muttollaayiram* might have been a work of the second century rather than of a later period. Reconciling the trend of our earlier discussion and the present material from Thiru Pillai's

valuable work we could say that the *Muttollaayiram* could be placed between the second and the third centuries.

The *Muttollaayiram* mentions three capital cities Maturai, Uraiyoor and Vanci. Possibly a fourth is also indirectly referred to—Kaviri-p-poom pattinam. These were well-known capital cities of the Paantiyas, Chozhas and Ceras. There is room for the belief that at some time in early history there was a dual monarchy in the Chozha country, Kaaviri-p-poom pattinam and Uraiyoor constituting the two capitals. One thing becomes certain that Uraiyoor's emergence as a capital city was independent of the Katal-kol calamity in Kaaviri-p-poom-pattinam. The Katal-kol might have put Pukaar out of action as a state capital and let Uraiyoor constitute the seat of the Chozha Government in the later period.

Maturai was a city of palatial buildings. It had broad streets.[16] It was a fortified city well protected with special guards. The *Maturai-k-kaanci* gives the following description in corroboration of the *Muttollaayiram* account: "The city walls are high and the gate-ways are lofty and strong. The streets are as broad as rivers. The crowds that throng the morning market place are varied in creed, race and speech. The city is much beflagged to denote shops and places of worship. Flags were given also as decorations for valorous deeds. The forces of the king march through the streets: soldiers, elephants, and chariots drawn by prancing horses. Petty traders sell their various wares such as cakes, flowers, perfumes and betel and arecanuts. Old dames carry about attractive gauds and flowers, and sell them to young and beautiful women. The import and export trade of the city is inexhaustible. It is evening, and rich noble men drive about the streets in chariots drawn by spirited horses. Fair dames deck themselves with jewels and flowers, and stand on high terraces gazing on the scenes below. People throng the temples where music is played. And women, escorted by their husbands and

16. Verse—13.

children, carry votive offerings to the gods. The poet here pauses to speak of eminent people dwelling in the city such as judges, ministers of state and counsellors. The poet resumes his account of the market scenes. The restaurants where delicacies are provided are well patronised. The evening market place in just as crowded as the morning. The moon is up, and maidens light their lamps and take to various enjoyments, adorning themselves and applying perfumes to their bodies. They play on the sweet-stringed yaazh and make merry with young men. Then follow a long description of the harlots of the city who lure away unsuspecting young men with their wiles, fleece them and abandon them afterwards. Quarrelsome maravars reel about the streets drunk with toddy. Young wives go to temples to pray to the gods for motherhood, singing and carrying lights and food-offerings which they share with the priestesses. Others indulge in rustic dances in honour of Murukan, to whom they attribute all ills that come to them. It is midnight, and the city is wrapped in sweet slumber. And so are the burglars whom the night watchmen cleverly check. Then it is early dawn. The brahmins chant their *Vedas* and bards tune their instrumeuts, mahouts feed their elephants, and horses in their stalls are restless. Traders smear the floors of the shops with cow dung and toddy-sellers open their shops for early customers. People in general open the doors which make a screeching noise. Women go about their household duties. Drunkards shout, while flatterers go about their business, watchers announce the hour, and loud drums are heard. Beasts in the zoo roar, the cock proclaims the dawn, and cranes invite their mates. Fair women sweep the floors bestrewn with the remnants of the night's festivities. It is now dawn. The forces of the king that went on foraying expeditious return bring in their spoils.

> This is the Matura town far-famed and rich
> And splendid like the abode of gods."[17]

17. The translation of Mr. J V. Chelliah M. A., from his *Pattu-p-paattu Ten Tamil Idylls* has been reproduced—p.p. (224-225).

An interesting point arising out of Maturai itself is its supercession of the older name Kootal. If we should make a careful study of the earliest Tamil works, the name Maturai would not be found, and in its place Kootal or Peraalavaayil. Madura is obviously a Sanskrit term that was adopted in exchange for the pure Tamil Kootal or Aalavaay, possibly, at the very early stage of Sanskritic influence in the Tamil country. One of the first things associable with the earliest Sanskritic influence is the Krishna and Balaraama cult. To the pastoral people in the South a North Indian pastoral God was not unwelcome and in all probability Maturai became the centre of the Krishna cult in the Tamil country. The fact that the *Cila-p-patikaaram*, though of a slightly later date than the professedly Cankam works, highlights this cult. The *Aaycciyar Kuravai* describes the cowherd women in the outskirts of Maturai as singing the praise of Naraayana in His manifestation as Krishna. The following episodes of Krishna's life are distinctly brought into *Aaycciyar Kuravai* (i) The incident of the *asura* coming in the guise of a calf; (ii) the incident of the *asura* standing as a fruit tree; and (iii) the incident of Krishna concealing the garments of the *gopis* when they were bathing.

There is no doubt that the cult along with the Baladeva cult took a deep root in the Tamil country round about Maturai in the first instance. Naturally the name sacred to Krishna in the North was given to what had been Kootal and Aaalavaai for a long time. It would appear that the Paantiyas had their humble beginings in Korkai from where they shifted their capital to Kootal possibly, for political reasons. Kootal was more strategic for handling to rival powers, Chozhan and Ceran.

The most important point arising out of all this seemingly random discussion is that the *Muttollaayiram* must belong to the post-Kootal period. After Maturai had superceded Kootal the latter name sank into the position of a tradition that has since been maintained.

The *Muttollaayiram's* description of the Cera capital is unfortunately not available in full but in the only verse on that theme and in a large number of verses on other themes the glory of the Cera capital is sung as if from first hand knowledge. The single verse on the capital may be freely translated as follows:

> "In the Vanci city surrounded by bowers and groves toddy vendors retailed the intoxicating toddy to the eager addicts; they filtered the sediments and fleas with their fingers and threw them away. Even this quantity of discarded toddy was enough to flood the streets and the elephants going hither and thither trod upon the toddy-wet streets and it was all slushy on that account."[18]

This verse obviously innocent of historical value and describing drunken revelry does not fail to open up a small vista in respect of the location of Vancimaanakar. Karoor in the Tiruccira-p-palli District and Cranganore in Malabar are usually considered the likely places to be looked for, for a possible identification of Vanci. Without entering into the details of the controversy we may present what this verse has to suggest.

The mention of toddy is sufficient to suggest a coastal area full of cocoanut trees yielding toddy. No doubt toddy was brewed even in the interior parts, but near the coastal areas it was a favourite drink and the association of Vancimaanakar with toddy as a first impulse must indicate that Vanci was a town near the coast rather than the interior. It may be of interest to note that most Cankam references to the Cera capital associate it with tocdy (a place where toddy overflows the streets).

Another association, obviously the result of ready and common knowledge, is the elephant. This should suggest,

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1 . Verse—89.

though not in such a strong manner, that the elephant is the animal of the region and the city must have been in it rather than far away from itr

The Chozha capital known to this work is Urantai. otherwise Uraiyoor. It would appear that between the two capitals Kaaviri-p-poom pattinam and Uraiyoor, Uraiyoor had greater importance as the primary capital except when there was a dual monorchy than Kaaviri-p-poom pattinam, whose fame rested mostly on its being a cosmopolitan port of phenomenal size and grandeur. A study of the earliest classics should impress the student that the importance of Kaaviri-p-poom pattinam was commercial and that of Uraiyoor, political. Of course, an alternate residence might have been provided for the king and his retinue in Kaaviri-p-poom pattinam. The comparative importance of both the cities as the political capital of the early Chozhas needs further careful study.

Let us collect the information that the work has to give on each of the countries. The most dominant characteristics associable with the Paantiyan country are scattered in the verses on the Paantiyaas. From times immemorial the Paantiyan country had been famous for its pearls which were exported to far-offcountries as a luxury commodity. The verse on *Naatu* speaks only of Paantiyan pearls. The gulf of Mannar had for longbeen the centre of pearl - fishing. The Venetian traveller, Marcopolo, makes extensive references to pearl-fishingin the Paantian country.

The chief port Korkai is also mentioned. As we have pointed out earlier, Korkai must have been the earliest capital of the Paantiyas. Sometimes it is identified on shaky grounds with Kavaatam.[19] The transfer of the eapital from Korkai to Maturai is hinted at by both Ptolemy and Pliny.

19. Srinivasa Iyengar, P. T.; *The History of the Tamils*—p. 189.

In *Narrinai* the following description Is found : "In the broad expanse of the sea near the Korkai harbour are found pearls of excellent water-mark.[20] A verse in *Akanaanooru* has this about Korkai : "The valiantly fighting Paantiyars guard with justice, the fairly large port of Korkai famous for its pearls."[21]

According to the *Muttollaayiram* the Paantiyan sway must have extended upto the coast of Tirunelveli District. In fact. the politico - geographieal concept of Paantiya Naatu had fully evolved during the period of the composition of *Muttollaayiram*.

The Chozha country comes in fora general description. If we have to look for features special to Chozha territory in the verses available, most of them would refer only to the agricultural prosperity of the country, heroism of the warriors and the strength of the elephantry. The Chozha king possessed vast areas of first class agricultural lands and much of the noise heard in the country was that raised by the tillers on the royal demesne.[22]

We are in possession of fuller details about the Cera country. One verse on *Pukazh* mentions the situation of the country in the neighbourhood of Kollimalai.[23] The Cera country was famous for its elephants. It was also a land of colourful flowers.

The chief port of the Ceras was Musiri.[24] This place is not to be confused with a town of that name near Tiriccira-p-palli. It was a port on the west coast. It was from this port that pepper was exported to countries in Europe. Here is an *Akam* verse : "The flourishing town of Musiri where large beautiful ships of the Yavanas (the Greeks) which

20. *Narr*—23.
21. *Akam*—27.
22. Verse—58
23. Verse—95.
24. Verse—94.

bring gold and take pepper come disturbing the white foam of the little fair Peeriyaaru of the Ceras."[25] A verse from *Puranaanooru* also describes the port in this manner : "They sell fish and bring on boats heaps of paddy which fill the house. The pepper heaped in the house is put into the bags which are thrown in confusion on the noisy beach. The gold brought in the ships are brought ashore in the boats which ply in the back water. The products of the sea and the mountain are mixed together and are given away to the guests. In Musiri which belongs to Kuttuvan wearing a gold garland and where the roar of the sea is heard, toddy flows like water."[26]

Having considered in brief some of the aspects of the capital and the country of each one of the crowned heads brought up in the work, we may pick out a few items of historical and political interest.

It should be evident even from a cursory look at the verses extant, that each one of the crowned heads had a regular standing army consisting of elephantry, cavalry and infantry. Possibly the chariot division was also maintained as early Tamil works very often mention '*Ter*'. Ter-p-patai was not unknown to the ancient Tamil country. The maravars or warriors were given systematic training. The cavalry and elephantry were also trained in special strategies.

Each of the dominions possessed a number of ports. Possibly the capitals were fortified cities.

Among the causes of war were : (i) Personal ambition; (ii) the need to subdue a neigebouring power to obviate surprise attacks; and (iii) failure on the part of a vassal to pay homage and tribute to a superior power. Among the techniques of war are: (i) laying siege to a port; (ii) engaging the horses and the elephants; (iii) infantry men's fight with swords, spears and arrows; and (iv) duels between the army leaders.

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25. *Akam*—129.
26. *Puarm*—343

The ethics of war were observed. Women children and old men were not involved in the chaos of the conflict. Fighting was not for the sake of killing, but for the sake of establishing a principle or securing an objective, ideological or material.

The Society : Turning our attention to contempoary society reflected in the work, we find that there were different strata. The kings and the nobles constituted the top stratum. The brahmins had by then become an identifiable section of society. They commanded royal esteem. During Nalankilli's birth day celebrations the brahmins received cows and gold.[27] The rest of the society consisted of the others including warriors, workers in different occupations and tillers of the soil.

A community of merchants and traders also flourished. Internal and international trade was in their hands.

The most important occupation was agriculture. The Chozha country was specially noted for its paddy. It had been for its ages true to the saying: "Chozhavalanaatu Corutaittu".

Capturing wild elephants was obviously one of the main occupations in the Cera country. It is not unlikely that the Ceras had monopoly over the capture of elephants. There must have been agricultural activity also in the Cera country, though much of the income was from pepper. There is no doubt that fishing constituted one of the major activities not only along the eastern coast, but also along the western coast. Extraction of toddy was a speciality of the Cera country.

The chief occupation of the Paantian country was pearl-fishing. Raising paddy and dry crops must also have been among the occupations of the people in that country.

Among the customs to be noted is the favourite custom of bedecking oneself with flowers. The Cera country is

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27. Verse—68

described as a country of beautiful and colourfui flowers. The use of flowers for ornamentation was peculiarly a Tamilian custom. In the Raamaayana of Vaalmeeki it is clearly mentioned as a Tamilian custom.[28]

Religious ideas : This work begins with an invocation to Siva and it is usual to find in the invocatory verse the religion of the author. The invocatory verse does not mention Siva by name, but calls him "Mutalavan" who is associated with the star *Aathirai* (Aardra). Tne Nataraja cult is hinted here; and during the period of this work it had not developed to any extant. But it is interesting that in this verse there is the identification Siva with Aardra, no doubt as an abstraction. Aananda Coomaraswamy has an interesting explanation about the origion of the Nataraja cult, that is, Siva as Taantavamoorti[29]. Aardra has the reputation of constantly going back and forth, as in the act of performing a dance. The star, with the constellation round about, resembles Taantavamoorti and there is the theory that an imaginative observer of the group of stars with 'Aardra' as the central point would have visualised a god in the dance pose. Once a god is born legends follow, as night the day.

The *rasa* of the invocation is '*adbhuta*' or wonder. Naturally it strengthens the belief that the poet was emotionally lost in the vision of Siva as Aatiraiyaan. There is no evidence in known early literature of Siva being frequently referred to as Aaatiraiyan. Probably for the first time such mention is made and that by the author of the *Muttollaayiram* himself. The author's own special liking for Siva as Aatiraiyaan is presented as an expression of wonder over why the generality of the masses should call Siva Aatiraiyaan as though He could have a birth star, Himself being the creator of the sun, the moon and all the stars. This technique of foisting a charge on others and trying to prove a contrary position while really the critic of the charge is himself guilty of it, is to heighten the effect of '*adbhuta*'.

28. *Vaalmiki Ramayana*—Kiskinda Kandam—Canto 42.
29. *The dance of Siva*—p. 93.

Murukan comes in for reference only once.[30] The god's peacock is also mentioned. Murukan is associated with the Katappam flower.

This particular verse is very significant. ery rarely do we come across poets demonstrating a fanatical love of Tamil language. The author of the *Muttollaayiram* compares Tamil to the Katappam flower garland fit to adorn the neck of the Paantiyan as a garland of well-merited praises.

From this solitary reference to Murukan in the verses available, it is not correct to come to any conclusion as to the author's intimate religious predelictions.

Strangely enough, there are more references to Vishnu in the available verses than to Siva.[31] Moreover, the author seems to revel in some of the well-known anecdotes of Vishnu. Vishnu is treated both as Naaraayana and His manifestation as Krishna.

Among the ,Vishnu anecdotes is the one of Krishna playing charioteer to Arjuua.[32] The stories of Krishna slaying the horse demon (Kesi), performing pot-dance (kut-a-k-koottu) and marrying Nappinnai are introduced in the poet's praise of the Paantiyan.[33] The first story is that of Kamsa sending Kesi to slay Krishna. The demon appears in the form of a horse before Krishna. The Lord cleaves open the demon's mouth and kills him. The second story is about Baanaa imprisioning Aniruddhaa the grandson of Krishna to keep him away from his daughter Usha. Krishna dances his way into the prison and rescues his grandson. He shows his skill as a pot-dancer. This anecdote is mentioned in a number of Tamil works like the *Cila-p-patikaaram*, *Naacciyaar Tirumozhi*, *Siriya Tirumatal* and *Periya Tirumoli*

The third story viz., the Nappinnai story is peculiarly Tamilian in its flavour. The aspirant to the hand of this girl

30. Verse—18.
31. Verse—19, 20.
32. Verse—19.
33. Verse—20.

is refiuired to engage in some kind of a Matador adventure, the difference being it is one bull in Spain plus a money prize, but seven bulls in the Nappinnai story plus Nappinnai herself. Krishna subdues the seven infuriated bulls and takes the hand of Nappinnai.

In the light of these ideas culled from the work we have only to reiterate that in the early period an eclectic spirit influenced one's approach to religion and there was absolutely no denominational thinking. God was god whether called byt he name of Siva or Tirumaal.

Perhaps a word may be said about the influence of animistic ideas in the work. No doubt even by the time the Cankam works took shape deism had started substituting animism, but Nature had such hold on the author's of poems that they continued to draw on her and give her all importance. The *Muttollaayiram* is by no means a spiritual work. Barring the invocation, God is utilized only for purpoeses of comparison. Throughout the work there are elements of the persistent animistic creed which is proof again of a pre-Pallavan age for this work.

A Note on Kaikkilai : This work is of peculiar interest as combining history and literature. The author's objective was perhaps to present *Akam* in the garb of *Puram.* All the *Puram* motifs handled by the poet stand apart from the *Akam* motif *kaikkilai.* In a sense, this work is two works in one. If all the *kaikkilai* verses were pulled out and presented separately, they would constitute a separate and complete work. The approach to *kaikkilai* has to be different from that to the *Puram* themes. The *Puram* themes deal with reality up to a point and there is some historical information in them. In other words, they are *informative*, not absolutely *imaginative*.

As regards the *kaikkilai* part, it is nothing but a series of stories of frustrated one-sided love in the usual pattern of *kaikkilai* poetry. It is not necessary to go into a detailed analysis of the *kaikkilai* portions, because there is nothing

very unusual about our poet's handling of this motif. It is out and out emotional material based on the psychology of separation. Though different girls seem to be involved in the business as victims to one-sided love, the emotional ramifications could have easily occurred to a single girl. Later poets developed the idea as though the response to the king's physical presence on the part of members of the fair sex was different for different ages and stages and thus was evolved the *Ulaa* type of literature.

Though the grammar of *Akam* had been fully developed in the early period, illustrations of *kaikkilai* had been very few. The *Akanaanooru*, the best anthology of *Akam*, has not much in respect of this condition of unresponded one-sided panting for the lover. Even in the other *Akam* works like *Narrinai*, *Kuruntokai*, *Ainkurunooru* the pure *kaikkilai* verses could be counted on the fingers. Perhaps the largest number of verses ever written on *kaikkilai* were those written by the author of the *Muttollaayiram* who, we may suspect, started with sincere *Puram* intentions and ended up as the most fertile specialist in *kaikkilai*, the three crowned heads coming in handy as the non-responding (innocent) hero.

The moral issue arising out of a girl falling in love with a person whom she is not likely to marry relates to the appropriateness of as girl giving her heart away to another without knowing his intention. There is also the unintentional sin of the hero who does not respond for the simple reason that he does not at all know about a girl loving him in secret.

It must understood that *kaikkilai* has a greater purpose than picturing a few helpless girls or lads in the throes of their unreciprocated love experiences. The true purpose of *kaikkilai* is to lead one from lower passions to realization of divine bliss. The purpose of *cirrinpam* is to lead to *perinpam*. Otherwise the human inspite of his six senses will still be at the bestial level. Panting for the Lord is an exalted extention of *kaikkilai*.

In this connection, we may refer to another classical idea, '*matalerutal*'. In this the obstinate lover whose advances are not heeded to by a girl mounts the *matal* made of palmyra leaves. It is to attract public notice and secure public intervention.

Both the *kaikkilai* and the *matal* were made to serve their exalted purposes in the later—day writings of the Naayanmaars and Aazhvaars. God as Naayaka and the devotee as Naayaki was how *kaikkilai* got itself retrieved from mere frustrated love of a maiden. The *matals* of Tirumankai Aazhvaar[34] were the pardonable threats of a devotee that he would mount the *matal* if God would not respond. In the *matal* the person threatening imagines himself a woman, but were never to mount the *matal*. However, in the concept of Naayaka-Naayaki idea, the devotee was always the woman and God the man. In philosophical terms, this connotes the *Jeevaatmaa-Paramaatmaa* relationship.

34. The *matal* is stated to be the palmyra stem which the lover rides in order to make public the love that he bears in acutest form. The poem on this aspect is named *matal*. For details, vide *Ilakkana Vilakkam*—Sutra 857; *Tolkaappiyam* - *Porulatikaaram*—Sutra 54; *Tirukkural* chap. 114; and *Kuruntokai*—verse 17.

15. THE KALINGATTU-P-PARANI OF JAYAMKONTAAN★

War-A very old theme of poetry : War is perhaps the oldest theme of literature, particularly of epic literature. It could be said to be the common *motif* of all great poetry. The greatest of European epics of all times, and the oldest, the *Iliad* and the *Oydssey* treat of what strikes one as a conflagration among wars. The Mahaabhaarata war was not less bloody than the Trojan war, and in the evaluation of the poet, merited hundred and fifteen thousand verses which is the length of the epic. The *Raamaayana*, neither less historical nor less legendary than theHomeric epics or the *Mahaabhaarata* is war-poetry (war between *Dharma* personified by Raamaa and *Adharama* personified by Raavana).

War involves killing, cruelty and acts, abnormally horrible and blood-curdling. But most poetry as an expression of beauty had handled the theme of war, with implications stated earlier, with a kind of ingenious technique that eschews the grotesque, the ugly and the unrefined and highlights the noble, and the beautiful. Descriptions of wars in the greatest epics are not reports of postmortem examinations, but accounts of heroism, noble sentiment, vivid parting scenes, memorable parting messages, sacrifice and chivalry. These only add to the beauty of poetry as the most beautiful form of literary expression. The epic composer is human

★ Paper contributed to a Souvenir of Tamil Cankam at Calcutta (1962)

and the epic itself is a means of humanizing a world of conflicts through a message which becomes the specific purpose of the epic. Even lesser products than epic poetry have war as their theme and each piece holds aloft a particular ideal or principle as a small beacon-light to the world. One could mention any number of small poems in every language, each describing an incident of a war or a battle.

The grotesque in wars and the non-human characters : It may thus be generalized that most war poetry by-passed the grotesque element in war. But the grotesque as part of the reality of life has not been completely dismissed as an unfit theme in literature of a higher type. Shakespeare has handled this theme in the way characteristic of him. The grotesque is always associated with the sub-human, and poets have very conveniently invoked the medium of the sub-human (or the supernatural not meaning the super-human) for the grotesque aspects of incidents like war. *Macbeth* is certainly the most extraordinary of Shakespeare's plays with the important role it assigns to the witches. There is a splendid creation of a strange world of sub-humans represented by the witches and ghosts. While humour is what is provided by these abnormal characters superficially, they do not fail to impress a sober thinker with the reality of an inhuman world that is merged into the human world and nullifies the sublimest of human endeavours by techniques which are too subtle to be defended against. But what would strike one as a point of identity between *Macbeth* and the *Kalingattu-p-parani* is the setting in which the super-natural characters perform their action. The *peys* (demons) of the *Kalingattu-p-parani* seem to bear close kingship to the witches of *Macbeth*. I believe that in the whole realm of English literature *Macbeth* alone provides the fullest scope to the participation of witches as active characters in the plot. Witches and ghosts appear, no doubt, in a number of plays, poems and even stories. They act just like human characters. Each of them has a distinct identity and role. For example, the dialogue between the witches in the

Rime of the Ancient Mariner lasts for a trivial second. But *Macbeth* has definite witch characters personifying distinct traits and claiming importance no less than that assigned to the key human characters of the plot. Shakespeare transacted plenty of business, as a play-wright, with witches, ghosts and apparitions; but *Macbeth* reveals the mastery of the play-wright in handling these rather un-usual actors.

The Parani-unique in Tamil : But for these contexts poetry in all the languages other than Tamil never had a special form exclusively made up of characters that are fantastic, and at the same time devoid of neither charm nor any normal human trait. We do not know how and when the *Parani* as a form of poetry originated, though we could say that so far as the earliest Tamil poetry was concerned this form was unknown.[1] This must have developed after the crystalization of the two Tamil Empires, the Chozha and the Paantiya, because grand war epic poetry could be based on the political events of both the Empires. Classical Tamil literature has at least one other *Parani* besides *the Kalingattu-p-parani,* the *Thakkayaaga-p-parani* of *Otta-k-koothan*. The later *Paranis* so far known to us are *Iraniavathai-p-parani, Kanja-vathai-p-parani, Ajnaivathai-p-parani, Mohavathai-p-parani,* and *Paasavathai-p-parani.* Of the two classical *Paranis* extant, the *Kalingattu-p-parani* seems to satisfy the canons of *Parani* literature more than the *Thakkayaaka-p-parani* though both are almost contemporaneous and of eminent authorship. All the other *Paranis* partake of the character of allegorical poems. The sublimation of lower passions is likend to a struggle or battle and the triumph of the will against sensual passions is what these *Paranis* celebrate. Thus it looks as if

1. The *Tolkaappiyam*, one of the earliest Tamil works extant is sometimes quoted in support of the belief that the *Parani* form was not completely unknown to early Tamil literature and that there was a more comprehensive form of literature called *Virundu* of which the *Parani* was a minor form. On this, however, there is bound to be controversy, because the position taken by those that believed in the antiquity of the *Parani* form has not been so far proved by any *Parani* composition of a period earlier than that of the *Kalingattu-p-parani.*

there is only one *Parani* which is a *Parani* in the true sense of the term, and one would find it difficult to answer the question "Did the *Kalingattu-p-parani*, possibly as the first complete *Parani*, provide the canons of *Parani* poetry for later grammarians? Or, did *Kalingattu-p-parani* conform to the canons of *Parani* poetry long after the canons had been laid down?"

The Parani type-its characteristics : The *Parani* form of poetry must have the following characteristics:

1. It should be in celebration of a king (or hero) who has won a war after killing a thousand war elephants;[2]
2. The metre of the poem should be *Eradi-k-kalithaa-zhisai* of the *Kochaka-k-kali* metre;[3]
3. As regards the organization of the subject-matter a certain order has to be followed and it is indicated as follows:

   (a) Invocation to God; (b) Description of the opening of the Door;

   (c) Description of the shrubland;

   (d) Description of the temple of Kaali;

   (e) Description of the demoniac hosts;

   (f) Dialogues of the Spirits;

   (g) In paise of the Hero;

   (h) The accomplishments of the Hero. This arrangement is according to the *Ilakkana Vilakkam*.[4] The *Panniru-*

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2. ஆனை யாயிரம் அமரிடை வென்ற
மானவ னுக்கு வகுப்பது பரணி.
—*Ilakkana Vilakka-p-paattiyal*-Sutram-78.

3. மயக்கறு கொச்சகத் தீரடி இயன்று
நயப்புறு தாழிசை உறுப்பிற் பொதிந்து
வஞ்சி மலைந்த உழிஞை முற்றித்
தும்பையிற் சென்ற தொடுகழல் மன்னனை
வெம்புசின மாற்றான் தானைவெங் களத்தில்
குருதிப் பேராறு செருகுஞ் செங்களத்து
ஒருதனி ஏத்தும் பரணியது பண்பே.
—*Panniru - paattiyal*—Sutram—57

4. கடவுள் வாழ்த்துக் கடைதிறப் புரைத்தல்
கடுப்பாலை கூறல் கொடுங்காளி கோட்டம்
கடிகணம் உரைத்தல் காளிக் கதுசொலல்
அதுபேய்க் கவள்சொலல் அதனால் தலைவன்

paattiyal[5] goes into details as to subject-matter, but broadly speaking they could be put into the scheme of *Ilakkana Vilakkam*.

The psychology of the Parani : From the foregoing it should be evident that the *Parani* type of poetical composition was meant to extol the achievements of a War Hero and as everybody in an ancient war was a participan tand not a spectator as in modern wars, in which reporters, photographers, story-writers, Red-cross workers and neutrals play no other role than recording the events, the actual description of the details of the war was left to the Spirits who were supposed to have been the invisible witnesses. Moreover, a word of explanation is necessary as to the predominant part of demoniac characters in a *Parani*. Modern psychology has plenty to offer by way of explanation in respect of both the weird nature of the descriptions and the abnormal characters in the *Parani*. The poet who celebrates the Hero is a worshipper of the Hero both as an admirer and as the recipient of benefactions from the Hero. One could safely suppose that, considering the intimacy that subsisted between poets and the patrons in the past, not a small number of poets had very strong sentimental attachment to the patrons so that the success of the patrons was an occasion for inner delight and failure an occasion for despondency for the poets. It is not fantastic to suggest that the human mind is creative also in

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வண்புகழ் உரைத்தல் எண்புறத் திணையுற
விட்டல் அடுகளம் வேட்டல் இவைமேல்
அளவடி முதலா அடியிரண் டாக
உளமகிழ் பரணி உரைக்கப் படுமே.
—*Ilakkana Vilakka-p-paattiyal* – Sutram 79.

5. தேவர் வாழ்த்லே கடைநிலை பாலை
மேவி அமரும் காளி கோயில்
சன்னியை ஏத்தல் அலகை விநோதம்
கனாநிலை நிமித்தம் பசியே ஓகை
பெருந்தேவி பீடம் அழகுற இருக்க
அமர்நிலை நிமித்தம் அவள்பதம் பழிச்சா
மன்னவன் வாகை மலையும் அளவு
மரபிணி துரைத்தல் மறக்களம் காண்டல்
செருமிகு களத்திடை அடுகூழ் வார்த்தல்
பரவுதல் இன்ன வருவன பிறவும்
தொடர்நிலை யாகச் சொல்லுதல் கடனே.
—*Panniru paattiyal* - Sutram 58.

the sense of visualizing the grim and grotesque as a sort of *defence mechanism* when direct revenge is not possible or has to be sublimated by reason of the influence of culture and refinement. A king who has a very bad and wicked enemy would at least mentally give him the most relentless and in-human of treatments. More mental murders are performed in the world than real physical ones, as substitutes for the latter. Even after triumph in a real action of vengeance an indignant king or hero wishes he had been more inhumanly cruel than he actually was to get rid of his enemy because he has not mentally secured the satisfaction of vengeance. The *Parani* is an expression of the poet, the hero's *alter ego*. If one would analyse the *Parani* the ugly and the grotesque associated with demoniacal thinking and action would evidence the post-revenge mood on the part of the victor in a war. The *Kalingattu-p-parani*, for instance, has plenty of the element of the grotesque illustrated by the actions of the Spirits on the field of battle. Kulottunga is the victor. The Kalinga war was won by him not before plenty of blood had been shed. But the affront and the challenge of the Kalinga king had provoked such thoughts of revenge that the winning of the Kalinga war completed only the physical part of the revenge. While the Kalinga war was won by the Chozhas, the objective, viz., the capture of the Kalinga king remained unfulfilled. Therefore a part of the physical and the whole of the mental and the psychological parts remained incomplete. The *Parani* completed it. The poet and the hero are identical in their thinking. The poet with his sentimental attachment for the Hero did for the Hero what the Hero whould have wished to do, viz., the completion of the physical victory by a psychic victory involving conjuring up of all fantastic and grotesque ideas about war. The thoughts, the actions, the aspirations and the techniques of the demonical characters of the *Parani* would ill-suit human participants. The War is no doubt fought by men, but the grotesque element is handed over to the Spirits. Even to the poet it is nconceivable that actions like preparing gruel out of blood

and bones of the warriors should be associated with human beings, even with the most relentless among the soldiers. Naturally he has to create demoniacal characters to whom such actions could be attributed.

The name : The name *Parani* is understood in different ways. It is understood as a poem composed from the *Parani* or the observation post in a battle field. It is also understood as a poem to be associated with the Bharani star presided over by Kaali and Yama.

The author : The *Kalingattu-p-parani* appears to be the first known complete *Parani* in Tamil literature illustrating everyone of the canons of *Parani* poetry. The author was, no doubt, a poet of very great eminence and we seem to have only his title not his real name. Jayamkontaan could well be a person's name, but one would suspect that it was a decoraction possibly by the kings, the real Jayankontaan[6] on the victory, in appreciation of the excellence of the *Parani*. If we study Tamil inscriptions we will come across the royal *birudu* 'Jayamkontaan' frequently. Names of places and divisions like Jayamkontaachozhapuram, Jayamkonta Chozha mantalam would suggest their association with kings rather than with poets. Therefore until more evidence is forth coming as to the real name of the author, he has to be referred to only by what sounds like a title: Jayamkontaan was a native probably of Deepankuti[7] of the Chozha country. From the fact that he was the author of the best *Parani* extant and from the esteem which his title, *Kavichakravartti* implied, one could hazard the shrewd guess that he must have composed many more poems not available to us. That he was a contem-

6. The King was also known as Jayatunga.

7. செய்யும்]வினையும் இருளுண் பதுவும்
தேனும் நறவும் ஊனும் களவும்
பொய்யும் கொலையும் மறமும் தவிரப்
பொய்தீர் அறநூல் செய்தார் தமதூர்
கையும் முகமும் இதழும் விழியும
காலும் நிறமும் போலும் கமலம்
கொய்யும் மடவார் களன்வாய் அதரம்
கோபங் கமழும் தீபங் குடியே.
—*Thumizh Naavalar Charithai* - Stanza - 117.

porary of Kulotunga-I who is celebrated in the *Kalingattu-p-parani* seems almost beyond dispute from internal evidence.[8] The date of the work could be roughly fixed to coincide with the end of the Kalinga war, about A. D. 1110. It has been accepted by scholars that Otta-k-koothan was later in point of time than Jayamkontaan and that the *Thakkayaaka-p-parani* was inspired by the *Kalingattu-p-parani.*[9] Otta-k-koothan is assigned to the period of time which would include the reigns of the three Chozha rulers celebrated in his *Moovar Ulaa* (roughly A. D, 1118 to 1163). To Otta-k-koothan also is assigned another *Kalingattu-p-parani* in celebration of a Kalinga war of Vikrama Chozha which, howevnr, is not available now.[10] It is an irony that what we know about Jayamkontaan the greatest *Parani* composer, is pitifully meagre.

The theme of the Kalingattu-p-parani : The subject-matter of the *Kalingattu-p-parani* is the Kalinga war fought between Kulottunga-I and the Kalinga ruler Ananta Varma Choda Ganga. Kulo ttunga-I had to invade Kalinga twice; and it is the second invasion that the poem clebrates. The date of the invasion is fixed as A. D. 1110 from epigraphical and other evidence. We may begin our study of the poem with a summary of the history it contains. When Kulottunga was holding court in Kaanchipuram, the royal Thirumantira-Olai communicated the news that kings that acknowledged the Chozha suzerainty had arrived to tender their tributes in gold. The king enquired if there was anyone who had failed to turn up and he got the reply that the king of North Kalinga had defaulted. The irate Chozha immediately ordered an expedition against the Kalinga ruler. This was to be under the overall command of Karunaakara-t-Thontaimaan who, it is said, volun-

8. The whole poem is dedlcated to Kulothunga and if one would go through the poem systematically, it will not be difficult to locate the dozens of references to Kulotunga referred to variou sly as Ubana Kulottaman, Abayan, Kulateepan, Kalipakaignan, Ravikulottamya etc.

9. Otta-k-koothan himself acknowledges the superiority of the Kalinkattu-p-parani by calling it "*Then Thamizh Daiva-p-parani*".

10. K.A N. Sastri : The Chozhas second Edition pages (342-43).

teered to bring the defiant Kalinga to book. The expedition soon left Kaanchipuram and after crossing the Paalaaru and Ponmugali rivers arrived on the banks of Pennaaru, possibly for a short break. As soon as the expeditionary force entered the Kalinga dominions the work of destroying the morale of the people started. The Kalinga ruler, however, treated the matter lightly because it was only an army coming in, without Kulottunga commanding it. His minister Yenga Roya tried to impress on him the gravity of the situation, but Anantavarma heeded not the warning. He could not put up anything more than a poor show and lost the battle. Though Karunakara-t-Thondaimaan could not capture the Kalinga ruler who evidently had fled, it was a glorious victory for the Chozha army.

An analysis - the pattern of Hinduism : As our purpose is not merely to evaluate the *Kalingattu-p-parani* as a source of history we need not concern ourselves with the poet's treatment of the historical material in the work. We shall first proceed to analyse the plan of the work. It consists of thirteen sections. The number is purely arbitrary and has no reference to any canon of *Parani* poetry. The work begins with invocations to God, rather to the different manifestations of God. The very first verse is in praise of Lord Siva and it is understandable that during the Chozha period when Saivism dominated in the Tamil country, the poet who was certainly an ardent devotee of the denomination should make his first obeisance to Siva. The second verse is in praise of Vishnu. While one may regard it as having no special significance, beeause Brahma too has been praised in the third song, there is room to believe that Vaishnavism enjoyed, if not royal patronage, at least toleration. This point has value against the background of the allegation, sometimes made that the Chozha emperors did not shy at persecuting Vaishnavism, and that one of the Kulottungas actually drove Sri Raamaanuja out of the Tamil country while torturing some of Raamaanuja's devoted followers. Personally I would regard the invocation to Vishnu as more than routine.

Then there are the invocations to Lord Brama, the Sun god, Ganesa, .Muruga, Saraswathi, Paarvathi and the Saptha Maathas. It is noterworthy that Sun-worship of which we hear in *Cilapati-kaaram* was still an itegral part of Hindu religious practices during the latter Chozha period. Indra is conspicuous by his absence among the gods whose praises have been sung in the first part. Though every Tamil work in the past invariably began with an invocation to God the *Kalingattu-p-parani* seems to have presented a beautiful pattern illustrative of the core of Hinduism as it had developed. The Hindu Trinity (Brahma, Vishnu and Siva) had been completely evolved, older gods like Indra had not only been assigned subordinate places, but also even left out, as part of literary conventions; Sakthi worship in its various forms had taken a definite shape and the Hinduism of today in the Tamil country had been born. The *Kalingattu-p-parani* is the first work in Tamil to present the perfected pattern.

A rare poetical motif - Its use in the Parani : The second section deals with what looks like a socio-religious practice. No one can vouchafe for a practice of the type of *Kadai-t-tirappu* either as a religious ritual or as a social practice. The *Tiruppaavai* and the *Tiruvempaavai* present the picture of doors being knocked at for being opened by fair sleepers who have overslept the time of union for a holy pilgrimage. History or tradition has not so far revealed any practice like this having really existed and it has to be assumed that the *Katai-t-tirappu* idea is just a poetical *motif*. The *Tiruppaavai* and the *Tiruvempaavai* tell us about groups of devotees rising up early in the morning to wake up those that were still in bed. The *Kalingattu-p-parani*, while it has utilised this *motif*, however, presents a different picture from those of the *Paavai* works. Fifty four stanzas are devoted to this section and each stanza ends with the appeal to the sleeper "Please open the door!" Many of the stanzas are in the nature of pure love poetry and the predominant *rasa* is *Sringara*. This *rasa* has been handled very well by the poet. *Sringara* has the

physical aspect and the emotional aspect of which the sentimental is an integral part. Within the physical aspect could be brought physical beauty (symmetry of form, beauty of the curves and the general physiognomy), situations like the love-quarrel, sexual union and the subsequent fatigue. The emotional aspect includes contemplating on the beloved, dreaming, experiencing pangs of separation, suspense while awaiting the lovers arrival etc The *Kalingattu-p-parani* has a good balance of both the physical and the emotional aspects of *Sringara*. The poet presents first the beauty of form. The breast of the beautiful lady symbolises the most exquisite and the sublime in human love. The gait of the lady has much to do with the kindling of pure love. The beauty of hair has no less an important part in the glory of the beautiful lady. The emotional side of love has received original treatment at the hands of Jayamkontaan.

The value of this section does not consist in its being a minor treatise on *Sringara*, but in its providing glimpses into the personality of Kulottunga.

Scholars are not agreed as to who knocks at the door, whether it is the soldiers returning from the battle field, in eagerness to rejoin their family, or a bard waking up sleeping beauties for participating in the festival of victory immediately after the Kalinga war. But in my opinion the ladies who celebrated the victory of the king knock at the door and wake the other ladies who were sleeping.

The physical setting : The third section is devoted to a description of the *Paalai* (desert) land which is so much associated with Spirits and Goddess Kaali. This section presents the picture of a land where water is scarce, where there is very little shade, where the ground is dry and full of cracks, where it is a burning cauldron, where the hot wind and the sand add to the many discomforts of the land and where the only vegetation is the low thorny shrubbery. The description of

the *Paalai* land seems justified and appropriate, because it provides the *locale* for the thoughts and actions of the Spirits headed by Kaali.

The Jayamkontaan and the architectural art : The fourth section is about the temple of Kaali located in the *Paalai* land, This section is really very interesting in a number of ways. Jayamkontaan has shown himself an expert in religious architecture. He has introduced quite a number of architectural concepts, both structural and decorative and some of these are Kataikaal (foundation), Suvar (wall), Thoon (piller), Uttaram (beam), Thulaamba (joists), Merkoorai (over head roof) etc. There is no doubt that Jayankontaan was a student of architecture and he presses his expert knowledge of that art into his poetic composition.

This section presenta the weird blended with the beauty suggested by the architectural perfection of the Kaali temple. *Silpa-saastra* has been conformed to in regard to the design of the temple, but the materials with which it is constructed are not stone or brick or mortar or even wood, but flesh and bones of men and beasts slain on the battle field. Even the precious gems that should be placed beneath the sanctified idol belong to queens of kings who were despatched to the other world by the infalliable sword of Kulottunga. This section sets the stage for the rather extra-ordinary project of the demoniac characters.

The non-human participants in the weird drama : The fifth section is in praise of the chief of the characters, Kaali. It is in the nature of a description of her holy personality and the poet has conformed to the convention of beginning from the feet and ending with the head (*paathaathi-kesa*). Kaali had come to be worshipped in the Tamil country a long time before Kulotunga and the poet was introducing no exotic deity in his use of this familier Goddess. The usual personality traits and activities of the Goddess have received sufficient notice.

The sixth section is devoted entirely to a description of the different Spirits that play the *dramatis personae* in the plot. Apart from the grotesque hunmour which such description provides, the section seems to prepare the reader for the unusual celebration of the Kalinga victory by the strange world of demons in which there is no higher philosophy of life than a kind of low-bred Epicureanism and in which there is very little place for a soul to be saved. The poet wishes that moral standards should not be applied to the actions mentioned and therefore makes them the actions of non-moral or un-moral characters. Jayamkontaan just like any other poet believed in and wished to preserve the innate beauty of the human personality and invented special characters to do deeds that would hardly reflect credit on the human actors. The world of Spirits which is presented to us by the poet is a a world of physically deformed individuals—lame, deaf and dumb, blind, dwarfish, stooping and armless. Each one of these characters is not congenitally deformed but gets the physical handicap in some event during the Chozha rule.

A separate section, the seventh, is devoted to the coming of an old Spirit from the Himalayas where it mastered the science of magic and to the demonstration of its new talent before Kaali. Kaali is on a couch made up of corpses. Corpse-eating female Spirits wave fly-whisk on either side. The chief of the servants, the *nedumpey*, informs Kaali of the arrival of an old Spirit from the Himalayas. Kaali is pleased to grant audience to the new-comer, who evidently is no stranger, but an old-timer of the gang so long living in self-imposed exile for fear of Kaali whom it had angered. This old bandicoot starts telling Kaali all about the new lore of magic it has mastered in the Himalayas. It is able to conjure up visions of battles involving cavalry, infantry and elephantry and also streams of blood. *Indirajaalam* (or magic) does not appear to be merely a visual affair. Senses like the auditory, olefactory, and tactile are also involved. The old *pey* seems to have scared the hosts with its display and the show is called

off abruptly. This section has a special value as introducing the historian among the Spirits who is not a mere chronicler, but one whose history extending over centuries is based on real experience and even personal participation.

The Historical material : The eighth, the tenth and the twelfth sections are the real historical portions of the work. The eighth is on the Chozha geneology, the tenth, a brief biography of Kulottunga and the twelfth a description of the Kalinga war. The eleventh section is also of profound historical value as it details the circumstances leading to the war.

In the eighth section entitled '*Raajapaaramparíam*' the entire lineage of the Chozhas upto Kulottunga is given. Beginning with legendary kings, the list contains historical persons in some chronological order. The most significant achievement of each king is also mentioned. The *Kalingattu-p-parani* is perhaps one of the few evidences of the still doubtful theory that the early Chozhas and the later Chozhas were related by blood.

In the ninth section the spirits are described as terribly hungry and asking for food of Kaali. The astrologer among the Spirits propheslies a great conflagnation and the Spirits are happy that before long their appetite would be fully satisfied.

The tenth section gives an account of the birth of Kulottunga, his early childhood, his training for kingship, his coronation, his exploits in the North, the fusion of Chozha-Chalukya line and the pastimes of Kulotunga. This section also mentions Kulottunga's trip to Kaanchi and his worship in Chidambaram *en route*.

The eleventh section tells the story of the provocation of Kulottunga when he learnt that the Kalinga king had defaulted in the payment of tribute. We learn further that Karunakara-t-tontaimaan took over command of the expedi-

tion to Kalinga and that he made a quick dash to Kalinga and took the Kalinga people and king by surprise.

In the twelfth section which is a description of the Kalinga war the exploits of the Chozha army are detailed.

The last section is the culmination of the poem, from the point of view of the Spirits, while from our point of view the twelfth section could well be the climax. The ritual of the Spirits immediately after the war is described and a picture of the battle field immediately after the battle is also presented.

The Beauty of the poem: The poem is predominantly a war poem and naturally *Veera-rasa* is the dominant *rasa* of the poem. But the other *rasas* too have been handled with an eye to a sense of proportion by the poet. *Sringara* is the dominant *rasa* of *Katai-t-tirappu* as we have already indicated. *Saanta* is the *rasa* of the very beginning of the poem in which God is invoked. The poem begins with *Saanta* and ends with *Saanta* conveyed by the concluding benedictory verses. *Karuna* or *Daya* is suggested in the pardon to the Himalayan Spirit granted by Kaali before it started the display of *Indira-jaalam*. *Karuna* can also be spotted in a number of other contexts. *Adhbuta* or wonder is best illustrated in *Indira-jaalam* and also in the description of the Kaali temple. *Anger* is in the words of Kulottunga and in the resolution of Karunakara and the soldiers. Humour or *Haasya* pervades the entire poem.

The poem is in metre suited to war poetry. One is reminded of Macaulay's *Horatius* in respect of the metrical system of the *Parani*. Marching notes are easy to find in many of the verses of the *Parani* as in Macaulay's poem. Jayamkontaan is justly famous for his handling the *taazhisai* metre in fifty four varieties and it is no exaggeration that he

is unsurpassed in this splendid literary feat. His handling of different *figures of speech* especially, the *metaphor* and the *simile*, is also that of a poetic genius.

The *Kalingattu-p-parani* is a rare work in which are blended history and folk-lore in a manner in which it is easy to sift history from folk-lore. Its value as a piece of poetical literature is not less than its value as history. Perhaps its uniqueness consists in its being made up of completely non-human characters who contribute greatly to the novelty of treatment and the romantic aspect. The *Kalingattu-p-parani* has not so far been surpassed - or equalled - even by *Thakkayaaka-p-parani*.

16. NATURE POETRY IN THE AAZHVAARS★

IT is said that the English poet Keats had dedicated himself to the ideal of Beauty. To him 'Beauty is Truth, and Truth Beauty'.[1] His rich and sensitive imagination had the capacity to seize upon the element of beauty in anything it came into contact with and express it in melodious verse. Again according to Stapford H. Brooke "there are two great subjects of poetry; the natural world..........and human nature. When poetry is best, most healthy, most herself, she mingles together human nature and Nature, and the love of each. Human nature is first in poetry and Nature second but they must be together, if the poetry is to be great and passionate, simple and perceptive, imaginative and tender. It is a terrible business for poetry when it is wholly employed by man, or wholly employed in Nature. In either case the poetry becomes thin, feeble, unimaginative, incapable of giving impulse or bringing comfort-[2]. What Brooke has observed in his study of English poetry holds good for Tamil poetry also especically ancient Tamil poetry, for the happy combination runs through all Cankam literature. The greatest study of the ancient Tamil po ets is the study of *man* not man of one class or society, *but i deal man and universal*

★ Paper presented in the 24th session of the All-India Oriental Conference, Varanasi, October, 1968.

1. *Ode on a Grecian Urn.*
2. *Naturalism in English Poetry*, p. 27.

man. They were expected to be both psychologists and naturalists, and Nature was important to them only in relation to man.

When Cankam classics came into being, Tamil poetry had already reached the last and final stage of its evolution in the poetic appreciation of Nature. In the poems of Cankam classics lines do occur which express simple joy at the coolness of water, the pleasures of shade and bower, child-like joy at the sight or use of flowers; lines also do occur in those poems in which the material beauty of the universe is expressed with the freshness of Keats and the keen observation of Vergil or Tennyson, but these lines are never without relation to man. Tamil poetry of the early period portrayed the actual customs of the people and the actual state of the landscape. The poets enter deeper into the secrets of Nature and examine Nature's relationship with man. While human passions in these poems are suggested in a few lines, the landscape and the natural setting appropriate to these passions are described at length. Many of these poems are, as it were, the landscapes, in verse. The shorter the poem the more intensive is its suggestiveness regarding Nature; the longer the poem the more detailed is the description of Nature, and more explicit the avowal of the mutual influence between Man and Nature. In short, Nature comes here as the background and stage for this drama of human life, or, as Palgrave says, Nature is clothed in the hues of human passion.[3]

The tradition of Cankam age runs through the whole range of later Tamil literature. Even the *Akam* verses in the ethical literature identify the older message with Tamil. The religious poetry of the *Bhakti* period abounds in descriptions of Nature following the tradition of the earlier period, but with a different outlook perhaps owing to the Sanskritic influence to some extent. Those who do not understand this

3. *Landscrope in Poetry*, p. 9.

message are not admitted as having any knowledge of Tamil.[4] The Aazhvaars and Naayanmaars, like mystics of other lands, experience God in and through Nature and to them, it does not appear as opposed to God; they experience even there a unity through union. The flowery garment of the world as revealed in the shining sun and the moon, the fragrance of the lotus and the lily and the sweet song of the cuckoo and the *koel* is for them a medium of ineffable perception, a source of exalted joy, the veritable clothing of God. The Aazhvaars see God in the five elements-earth, water, fire, air, space and in the Sun and the Moon, and above all, in the soul of every living being. They visualise the universe as the form of God. Even as early as *Narrinai* this tradition seems to have come intro vogue. The invocatory verse of that work contains this vision : "The flawless Lord with the discus, celebrated as the foremost of the *Vedas*, has the vast earth for His feet. the encircling, pristine ocean for His garment, the expanse of space as His body, the directions for His hands, the moon with cool rays and the blazing sun as His eyes, with all these as part of Himself". This vision is akin to that of Arjuna who beheld the Universal Form of the Lord with the aid of the supernatural eye bestowed by Him.[5] Tirumankai-yaazhvaar experiences this vision and says : "clothed with the garment of the waters of the ocean, with the wide earth for His foot, with the atmosphere as His body, the eight fair directions for His shoulders, and the zenith of the globe for His crown, He stands"

The hymns of *Naalaayiram* abound in the descriptions of Nature, its mountains, rivers and cities these *Aazhvaars* saints had visited. These places are held to be equally holy and divine as the temples where the Lord has chosen to be present as *arca* or idol. It is, therefore, tantamount to saying that the description of Nature is one way of describing the Lord

4. *Parip* 9 : 36
5. *Bh. G,* 11 : 5 to 8.
6. *Peri. Tm.* 6.6. 3.

Himself. Tirumankaiyaazhvaar describes the Himalayas as a place full of odoriferous groves where the dark clouds rumble and the heavy feathered peacocks climbing the steep slopes on the bellies dance on peaks[7]; where roam the sharp-toothed lions which have their abode in the caves and which frighten even the huge mountain-like and majestic tuskers;[8] wherein the shade of the *venkai* trees on flowery beds the tusker sleeps with its consort; and as a great mountain with its slopes on which enclose the *venkai* trees with thick-growing pepper creepers entwining them, and with the adjoining hill haunted by striped, battle-ready tigers.[9] The *Aazhvaar* refers to *cinkavel kunram* (*Ahobilam*) where the tigers from their hiding in bamboo bushes watch the tracks of the roaming elephants.[10] In the Tirupati Hills, according to *Pootat-taazhvaar*, a male elephant uproots a tender bamboo and thrusts it into a big honey-comb and offers it with sweets honey to its sweetheart.[11] The same idea is repeated by Tirumankaiyaazhvaar too[12]. This *Aazhvaar* shows Tirumaali-runcolai Hills to us as a place where, as the clouds having collected water from the deep sea ascend the sky rumbling, the lion, mistaking that sound for the trumpeting of the elephant, roars in reply.[13]

Now the descriptions of the rivers. The sacred Ganga in its course brings the clothes and garlands of *Apsara* women and also precious stones;[14] the river through its main force and with swift currents in its depths, breaks the mountains and pushes along its course even huge tuskers.[15] The holy Kaaviri also brings in its course the tusks of elephants killed by lions, white-teak trees (*akil*), excellent pearls, and

7. ibid. 1. 2: 1
8. ibid. 1. 2: 2
9. ibid. 1. 2 : 7.
10. ibid. 1. 2 : 6.
11. *Ir. Tv.* 75.
12. *Peri. Tm.* 1 2 : 5.
13. ibid. 9. 8 : 6.
14. ibid. 1. 4 : 4.
15. ibid. 1. 4 : 7.

the white locks of hair of *yak* (kavari maan) and other such precious mountain finds;[16] the river in its swelling course carries many kinds of flowers and heaps of mangoes which drop into the river because of the falling of coconuts from tall well-grown trees;[17] it also gathers in its course the nine precious stones, the precious pearls in the bamboos and the locks of hair of the *yak*;[18] it collects and carries along white-teak logs, sandal wood logs, gold ingots and pearls;[19] it brings in its course gold ingots, pearls, claws of lions and tusks of elephants.[20]

The towns and cities are spoken of as being surrounded by the beautiful fields and groves. Tiruvallikeni is a town where into the cool, thick groves, with fragrant *kuravam* flowers and resounding with the sounds of cuckoos and peacocks, the sun's rays do not penetrate at all.[21] Tirukkoyiloor is described as a place which is like the smithy of the goldsmith, with dark *neytal* flowers as charcoal, with *punnai* buds as pearls, the blossoms as gold, and with red lotuses as fire;[22] as a place where the sweet sugar-cane grows to the music of swarms of honey bees in groves full of *konku* blossoms, *curapunnai* and *kuravam* trees;[23] the town is surrounded by arecanut groves; the arecanut palm have buds resembling white pearls, the ripening ones becoming green emeralds, and the ripened fruits reddening like corals.[24] In the groves near Tiruvahintirapuram herds of monkeys romp, about, eating jack fruits, on *venkai*, *konku*, *canpakam* trees full of golden flowers.[25] The women agricultural labourers at *Ceekaazhi* take the *neytal* flowers for their eyes and *aampal* flowers for their lips stand still refraining from weeding opera-

16. ibid. 3. 8 : 3.
17. ibid. 4. 4 : 3.
18. ibid. 5. 1 : 9; 5. 4 : 9; 5. 7 : 10.
19. ibid. 6. 9 : 5.
20. ibid. 6. 9 : 6.
21. ibid. 2. 3 : 7
22. ibid. 2. 10 : 3.
23. ibid. 2 10 : 4.
24. ibid. 2. 10 : 7. This description is identical with one found in Campantar's *Tevaaram*.
25. ibid 3. 1 : 5.

tions;[26] the town is surrounded by the fields where the *neytal* flowers resemble the eyes, the lotuses the faces and the *aampal* flowers the collection of lips of beautiful women;[27] where in the groves the juice oozes out of jack-fruits with the weight of which the branches are bent down, because of the fall of the ripened arecanuts as a result of sqirrels leaping about from branch to branch.[28] The description of Naankur is catching. Near that town the buffaloes keep wallowing in pools with mud on their horns after having eaten up well-grown sugar canes;[29] on the top of mansions abound pearls dropped from clouds pierced by spears planted on the building top;[30] beside the beautiful groves the sound of the musical instrument spread sky-high; the hum of the bees, the chant of *Vedas*, and the tinkling of anklets of women combine into something like the roar of the floods at the time of Deluge;[31] the peacocks dance to the hum of bees at the time of rumbling of the clouds overhanging the cool and vast groves;[32] the young arecanut trees drop their pearl-like buds into crab-holes vacated by the crabs which with wide open mouths enter the lotus flowers on slushy ground;[33] the gazelle-eyed, red-lipped damsels teach soft words to emerald-green parrots perching on their hands.[34] In the groves surrounding *pullampoothankuti* the *curumpus* (species of wasps) drone on fragrant flowers, comely peacocks dance, and ;striped winged bees make music.[35] In Kootaloor the fish in water mistake the *taalampoo* (sword flower) on the shore for cranes and get frightened. In the mango groves at Tiruvellarai the cuckoos to counter the bitter tang of the tender mango leaves pecked at by them drink the sweet juice of jack fruits.[36] The mansions at

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26. ibid. 3 4 : 3.
27. ibid. 3. 4 : 5. cf. *Terazhuntoor* hymn 7. 5 : 10.
28. ibid. 3. 4 : 8.
29. Ibid. 3. 8 : 6.
30. ibid. 3, 9 : 4.
31. ibid. 3. 10 : 5.
32. ibid. 4. 2 : 3.
33. ibid. 4. 4 : 3.
34. ibid. 4. 4 : 6, cf. ibid. 3. 8 : 8.
35. ibid. 5. 1 : 1.
36. ibid. 5. 3. : 4.

Tirukkannankuti are surrounded by plantain fields heavily laden, arecanut trees growing tall, *kuravam* trees, fine jack-fruit trees, cool mango groves and *maatavi* creepers;[37] in that place herds of peacocks roaming the woods stop to dance as thick clouds provide drum music with their rumbling, and as the bees in search of honey hum tunes.[38] The world is thus the beautiful garment of God to these mystic seers.

Nature is looked upon as the very form of Godhead worshipped by almost all the Aazhvaars. Tirumaaliruncolai, Tiruvenkatam and Cinkavezh Kunram are to them the very Lord and the saints describe those mountains in their hymns without even speaking of the respective deities there.[39] Says Nammaazhvaar for example: "*Tiruvenkatamaamalai onrume tozha nam vinai oyume*"[40] -'All our sins will be removed by the worship of Tiruvenkatam mountain only.' *Sandilya Sutram* compares the creation proceeding from God with the creation of poetry or any work of art proceeding from the imagination of the poet or artist. This gives us a better understanding of the poetry of the Aazhvaars. To Nammaazhvaar Nature is the bautiful form of the Lord: *yaavaiyum yaavarum aayninra maayan*[41]-'*Maayan* who becomes all objects and all persons too.'

The Aazhvaars see the Lord as the pure form reflected in Nature. At other times, Nature itself appears to them as worshipping the Lord very much like themselves. They see in Nature the animals such as elephants, lions and monkeys, birds such as parrots and peacocks, and insects like the honey-bees worship and sing the glories of the Lord. For example, in the Tirupati Hills a male elephant performs *aacamana* (ablutions) by washing its mouth and its feet in its rut (ichor), gathers fresh flowers laden with honey and offers its worship to the majestic Lord at Venkatam.[42] The mythological lion (*aali*) kills an elephant, takes out its tusks

37. ibid. 9. 1 : 6.
38. ibid 9. 1 : 7.
39. *TVM* 2. 10; 3, 3. *Peri Tm* 1. 7; 1. 8; 2. 1. *Na. Tm* 9; *M. Tv.* 76. *Ir Tv.* 53, 75; *Mu. Tv.* 58, 68, 71, 75; *Nan. Tv.* 39, 47, 48.
40. *TVM* 3. 3 : 8.
41. ibid. 6. 8 : 7.
42. *Mu. Tv*, 70.

and offers oblations at the feet of the deity at Cinkavezh Kunram.[43] The monkeys enter the floral garden in the early hours of the morning, gather flowers just blossoming and offer worship.[44] The redbeaked parrot at Tiruccitrakootam sings the four *Vedas*.[45] The parrots are taught to utter *Vedic* words by the ladies belonging to learned families.[46] The cuckoos in the fine orchards at Velliyankuti are heard to pronounce "*Hari Hari*"[47] There is a parallel in *Kampa-raamaayanam* where at Citrakoota hills the forest animals such as the elephants, male monkeys (*katuvan*), peacocks female monkeys (*manti*), and boars and the pythons in their own way render service to the *tapasvins* in the respective *aasramas*. In all these places, one feels, that the saints are identifying themselves with these comrades in worship, of whom they seem to be highly proud. Music, dance and poetry are all forms of the Lord who is Himself an artist.

The universal love of the *Aazhvaars* may be better understood by our realization of the wider scope of their poetic interest with vision of Beauty everywhere. A list of the *fauna* and *flora* of their poetry may help us here. One may note in their poetry various kinds of bamboos, the sugar-cane, various kinds of paddy and grains, the coccanut, the arecanut, the palmyra and varieties of the plantains being often found mentioned. The sandal, the mango, the *venkai*, the *konku*, the *punnai*, the *jnaazhal*, various kinds of jack tree, the *vaakai*, the *nelli* (*aamalakam*), the *curapunnai*, the *kuravam*, the *acoku*, the aloe, and others are referred to. *Milaku* and *kati* (pepper varieties), turmeric are their favourities. Some of these are food like paddy; others sandal, *akil*, etc., are famous for their aroma; still others like the jack, the mango, the plantain etc., are noted for their fruits; a few others like the *venkai*, the *kuravam* etc., for their flowers and fewer still like pepper for their spices.

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43. *Peri. Tm* 1. 7 : 1.
44. *Ir. Tv.* 72.
45. *Peri. Tm.* 3. 2 : 6.
46. ibid. 3. 8 ; 8.
47. ibid. 4. 10 ; 7.

The *Aazhvaar* poets are generally fond of flowers. They refer to the blooming *konku*, *venkai*,*punnai*, *kuravam*, *makil* (*vakulam*), *kuruntam*, *cerunti*, *mavval and mallikai* (jasmine varieties) *maatavi*, *kurukkatti*, *canpakam*, *pitavam*, *karuvilai*, *poovai*, *iruvaatci*, *paatiri*, *kurumukai* and the varieties of the sword flower (*taazhai* and *kaitai*), *mantaaram* (*paarijaatam*); and *kurinci*. The beautiful water flowers of all varieties and description whose distinctions the later generations have forgetten to occupy in the *Aazhvaars* unique position of beauty-*kazhuneer cnkazhuneer*, *kaavi*, *karunkuvalai*, *cenkuvalai*, *karuneelam*, *neelam*, *kumutam*, *alli* (*aampal*), *kamalam*, *aravintam*, *pankayam*, *muntakam* and *taamarai* (lotus varieties).

The floods of Kaaviri, Mannai and Ganga rush down carrying in them many precious things like fruits, fragrant wood, yaak tails, (*vencaamarai*), elcphant tusks, precious gems, pearls, coral and gold conches and fish, and thereby enriching the country. Tirumankaiyaazhvaar mentions even the clothings of nymphs being carried by the waters of the Ganga.[48]

Mention is made of the birds of all varieties by these saints. The *koel* (cuckoo?), the peacock, the dove, the parrot, the anril, the *cempottu*, the *poovai* (*naakanavaayp-pul*), and even the wild cock, the crow and eagle are the favourite birds like *kuruku*, *naarai*, *kokku* and *annam* have beauty of their own and the saints refer to them in many contexts. The dancing of the peacock according to the singing of the bees and the repetition of the *Vedas* and the God's name by the parrots is often mentioned.

Among the insects the bee is a highly popular one with our saints. It is more attractive to them than the birds. Though the possession of six legs is the characteristic eature of all insects in general, that aspect (*arupatam*) is reserved for the bees by the poets of our country. The keen. and loving eye of the poet distinguishes a variety of them : *vantu*, (beetle), *curumpu*, *varivantu*, *tumpi*, etc. The poets

48. *Peri. Tm.* 1. 4 : 4

ose their hearts in their hum and dance round the honey of the flowers; hence the general name *matukaram* to them.

The monkeys (a veriety of them, namely *katuvan, manti, kuranku*) the loving couple of elephants, the dark buffalo, the varieties of deer (*pulvaay, kalai, manai maan*), the *yaak*, the boar varieties (*kezhal, eenam*), the tiger, the lion, the *maacunam* (perhaps python), the wild dog, the must elephant, and the jackal engage the attention of these poets and they occupy the happy place in their hymns. The mention of the *aali* by these poets is perhaps in the sense of a lion; for otherwise it is a mythological animal.

The poet-saints enjoy the glimpses of divine beauty in the jumping and darting of the fish in the rushing floods and in the sleeping ponds : *vaalai, kayal, varaal, kentai, cel, aaral, velliravu* and *malanku* (serpent fish) are the favourite fish, varieties mentioned in the hymns. The crab varieties (*nantu nalli, alavan*) and the tortoise have all attracted the attention of the Aazhvaars along with sacred conches *ippi, canku* and *valampuri*.

In conclusion, we can say that the universe appears to the *Aazhvaars* unimated by the vital impulses of God. To them the universe of *cit* and *acit* has its unity only in *Brahman*. It is the creative expression of the divine sports of love. The beauties of nature and the fair forms of human and celestial beings are but partial revelations of the unsurpassed beauty of God. To the *Aazhvaars* who are gifted with 'the vision and the faculty divine' all this is the play, the drama of that love enshrined in their heart. It is the beauty of the Universe, *Bhuvanasundara* as the *Bhaagavatam* intuits it, or *Trailokya sundara* as the Tamil Saivites term it. Then universe appears as the divine light to Poykaiyaazhvar : *vaiyam takaliyaa vaarkatale neyyaaka, veyya katiron vilakkaaka*''[49] - 'The world is the bowl; the sea is the ghee; the fiercerayed sun is the luminous wick'. To the *Aazhvaar* saints 'All is Vaasudeva'- '*Ellaam Kannan*'.[50]

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49. M. Tv. 1.
50. TVM

17. THE NAALAAYIRAM AND THE TIRUMURAIS : A BIRD'S EYE COMPARATIVE VIEW★

THE compositions of the Aazhvaars and the Naayanmaars, as we know, are the products of the *Bhakti* period approximately lasting from the sixth centry to the end of the eighth century. These compositions, at least many of them, bear close resemblances in their style, form, purport, motif, ideas and even in their uses of words, phrases and other expressions, since the two wings of the *Bhakti* movement-one of Vaishnavism and Saivism - were contemporary and co-operative and had many close resemblances both as having their origin based on the *Vedic* faiths and having their main objective of routing their common enemies of Buddhism and Jainism. The leaders of both the faiths clearly saw that the popularity of their doctrines inculcated by them depended on their attracting adherents from all ranks irrespective of caste creed and social status. Large concourses of people under the leadership of one gifted saint went from place to place chanting all along their way, visiting temples and offering their worship to the deity. Their joint recitation of the hymns necessitated a kind of simple chorus music in which any one can join. The *pan* system of music, which is peculiar to the Tamils, and in a way analogous to the music

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of the *Saama-veda*, was pressed into service. Thanks to the simultaneous and parallel ventures of the Naayanmaars and the Aazhvaars, the religious revival was at once a Renaissance of devotion and, what is more, a Renaissance of Tamil Poetry which led to the establishment of a great popular tradition of Tamil verse. A brief general comparative survey of the two traditions of the *Tirumurais* and the *Naalaayiram* may be attempted here.

Even the legends regarding the canonical arrangements of these hymns are similar in the two cases. As the studente of history of Tamil literature are aware of these legends, it is not necessary to recount them here except to point out the salient similarities in them. In the history of Saivite hymnology the idea of collecting all she hymns on hearing the stray hymns occurs first to the Chozha emperor and not to Nampiyaantaar Nampi, the saint, belonging to Tirunaaraiyoor, a village very near to Chidambaram; whereas in the Vaishnavite hymnology the idea occurs to Naathamuni, the saint, who is a priest in the Vishnu temple at Kaattumannaar Koil, a small town which is also situated near Chidambaram. In the former case the task might have been comparatively easy with the royal influence. In the latter, it must have been a herculean task as it had to be undertaken with the individual effort. Any how it may be noted that the collection and redaction of the *Tirumurais* was not complete, but is fortunately complete in the case of the *Naalaayiram*. In all other respects, the transmission of the *Tirumurais* and the *Naalaayiram* is similar

It may be pertinently remarked here that the sacred literature of the Saivites in Tamil poetry is nearly thrice in volume that of Vaishnavites, the hymns of Campantar alone being nearly as voluminous as all the works of the twelve Aazhvaars put together. This may prove in a way the greater popularity of Saivism than Vaishnavism among the Tamil people of South India. Another feature of striking

contrast in both the canons is, that, while the poems of Naathamuni, the redactor of Vaishnavite canon, who perhaps, had no Tamil works to his credit, had not found a place in the canon whereas the poems of Nampiyaantaar Nampi, the redactor of Saivite canon, are included in the Eleventh *Tirumurai*.

Among the Vaishnavite canons, the First Book contains hymns on Lord Vishnu only except one poem, *Kanninuncirut-taampu*, which is on Nammaazhvaar who is a human, an Aazhvaar. The Second and Third Books consist of hymns exclusively on the Lord. But to the Fourth Book which contained hymns on the Lord alone, a poem on Raamaanuja, *Raamaanucanoorrantaati*, was added at the time of Raamaanuja. So this Book also contains a poem on a human, who is an Aacaarya. On the other hand, in the first ten *Tirumurais* all the hymns are on the Lord Siva excepting in the Ninth *Tirumurai* which contains a decad on the Lord Muruka, the son of Siva, who is also a god.[1] The Eleventh *Tirumurai* is a collection of forty-one *Prapandhams* by twelve saints some of them being incomplete.[2] on the Lord Vinaayaka, Muruka and Siva. The total verses in this Book are 1388. In this collection there are six poems on Tirujnaanacampantar, one poem on Tirunaavukkaracar, two poems on Kannappa-naayanaar, one poem on Ceramaan-perumaal and one poem on all Atiyaars (devotees) put together. Some *Puraanic* stories occur both in the *Naalaayiram* and in the *Tirumurais* and they have been adapted by the saints of their respective faiths to their own advantage in extolling their God as the Supreme Being, as for instance the story of Siva giving exposition to

1. Centanaar's poem on the Lord Muruka at Tiruvitaikali.
2. *Tirveeynkoymalai-Ezhupatu* (missing stanzas 48-61); *Moottapillaiyaar Mummanikkovai* (missing stanzas 24-30); *Civaperumaan Tiruviraltai-manimaalai* (it contains only 37 stanzas; but according to a grammatical principle it should contain 40 or 50 stanzas); *Tirukkazhumala Mummanikkovai* (it contains only 12 stanzas as it does not satisfy the rule of an *antaati*, it should contain at least 30 stanzas); *Aalutaiya-pillaiyaar Tirukkalampakam* (it contains 49 stanzas only whereas as per a grammatical rule the poem should contain 50 or 100 stanzas); and it seems that *Khesetravenpaa* must contain more verses on some more sacred places.

the quintessence of the *Vedas* to Canaka and others,[3] the destruction of Tiripura,[4] the story of the rescue of Maarkkanteya from the god of Death (Yama)[5] and the story of churning the ocean and supplying the nector to the Devas.[6] Again it is seen that in the hymns of the Aazhvaars the story of Vaanaacura has been pressed into service to raise Vishnu as the Supreme Being,[7] the story of Daksha's sacrifice has been done so in the hymns of Naayanmaars to raise Siva as the Supreme God.[8] If there is the story of worshipping the feet of Vishnu by Siva[9] aud also the story of seeing the flowers on the head of Siva which were placed by Arjuna at the feet of Lord Krishna referred to by the Aazhvaars,[10] thers is a counterpart of a similar story of Vishnu being the recipient of the holy dise (*cakra*) from the hands of Siva after a severe penance referred to by the Naayanmaars.[11] Sometimes stress is being made on the different aspects of one and the same episode. For instance, the Aazhvaars emphasize the churning of the ocean and supplying the nector to the Devas by Vishnu[12] and the Saivite saints on the swallowing of all-destroying poison produced as a by-product in the churning process and saving the world from destruction by Siva.[13] If

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3. M. Tv. 4; Nan Tv. 17; Periyal. Tm. 1.8:10; Peri. Tm. 2.2:8; 5.1:9; 5.7:3; 7.8:2; 8.9:4; 10.6:1; TVM 2.10:10; 6.6:5; TV; 270, 274, and 287; T*evarams* : 1.41:7; 1.48:1; 1.132:1, etcl; 4.36:6; 4.40:2; 4.64:3; 6.18:3; 6.50:3; 6.57:2; 6.59:5; 6.66:2; 6.73:1; 6.74:9; 6.75:5.
4. TVM 1.1:8; 5.10:4; 7.6:7; TVS 280, 295 to 310.
5. ibid. 4.10:8; Tevaram 1.41:7; 4.36:6; 4.37:1; 4.43:2; 4.65:1; 7.55:1; TVS 535.
6. Ir. Tv. 36, 68, 85; *Tirumurai* 11.24.68.
7. Periyal Tm. 5.3:9; Tiruc-virut 53, 70, 71 : Peri Tm 3.4:3; 4.2:5; 4.3:8; 5.1:7; 6.7:6; TNT 20; TVM 2.4:2 3.8:9; 3.10:4; 4.8:9; 7.4.8 7.10:7; R.N 22
8. For example, TVS 299 to 310.
9. Ir. Tv 78; Nan Tv. 9; Mu. Tv. 6
10. TVM 2.8:6
11. Tevaram 1.41:7;1.132:8;4.49.5 ; 4.64:8;4.65:9;6.50:4;6.51:1; 7.66:3;
12. M. Tv. 2.7; Mu. Tv. 27; Nac Tm. 8:7; Peru Tm. 8.8; Tiruc-viru 21; Peri Tm. 5.7:4; 6.1:2; TVM 1.6:6; 3.4:9; 3.8:1; 5.6:5; 5.10:10; 7.4:2; 8.1:5; 8.4:4.
13. Tevaram. 1.2:4; 1.3:8; 2.74:5; 2.85:1, 5; 3.1:5; 3.71:6; 4.53:4; 4.62:5; 5.3:1; 5.37:4; 6.8:11; 6.33, 6; 7.16:8; 7.32:2.

the Aazhvaars revel with three strides of Vishnu[14] and His Visvaroopa, the Naayanmaars lose themselves in Siva's form of the big blaze of fire; if the former say that Vishnu's greatness cannot be understood by Siva and Brahma, the latter say that even Siva's physical greatness cannot be understood by Vishnu and Brahmaa.[15] Again, both the Aazhvaars and the Naayanmaars see God in the five elements - earth water, fire, air, space, and in the Sun and the Moon, and above all in the soul of every living being.[16]

In the arrangement of the hymns in the Saivite canon Nampiyaantaar Nampi has followed some principles, at least in the first seven *Tirumurais*. He has taken the periods of the saints who left their mortal frame into account and has proceeded on the basis of one chronology of their deaths. The hymns of Tirujnaanacampantar who attained *mukti* first were placed in the first Three Books and those of Tirunaavukkaracar who left the world next to Campantar in the next Three Books. It is also worthy to note that the first decad which is the earliest of Campantar with a divine incident behind it has been placed first in the First Book.[17] Similarly the decad of Appar which has a divine incident (relating to his conversion from Jain faith to Saivite one by the prayers of his sister Tilakavatiyaar)[18] has been placed as the first decad in the Fourth Book of the canon. The decad of

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14. M. Tv. 3, 17, 21; Ir. Tv. 5, 30, 87, Mu. Tv. 5, 48 Nan Tv. 35, 70; Periya 2.10:7; 4.9:7 Nac Tm. 2:9; 4:9; 5:10; 12:2; Peru-Tm 2:3; Peri Tm. 1.10:4; 3.1:5; 3.10:5; 4.4:7; 4.6:2; 5.4:3, etc.; TVM 1.3:10; 2.87:; 4.8:6; 5.3:5; 5.10:9; 7.56:;8.1:5; 9.2:2; 9.3:2.
15. Campantar makes it a point to refer to Siva's uuiversal form of the blaze of fire and the search of His feet by Vishnu in the form of a Boar and of His crown by Brahma in the form of a Swan invariably in the ninth stanzas of each decade in his Tevaram.
16. For instance, Peri Tm. 3.6:3; 4.1:3; 4.9:5; 5.10:1 7.5:5; TVM 1.1.7; 3.6:5; 4.5:9; 5.6:3; 6.9:1; 7.8:1, 2; 10.4:11; Tevaram 1.22:7; 1.42:4; 1.76:7; 3.57:3; 4.32:7; 6.94:1.
17. *Panniru-tirumurai Varalaaru* - Part I : (Annamalai University, 1962) pp 26-27; 52-54.
18. ibid. pp. 145-146.

Cuntarar who belongs to a later period, which has a divine incident behind it, has been placed first in the Seventh Book.[19]

A similarity can also be seen in the Vaishnavite canon codified by Naathamuni with a different norm. Naathamuni collected the hymns into four Books in the manner of four *Vedas* arranged by Vyaasa. But it appearst that the first decads of the first two Books which bear divine incident with Periyaazhvaar and Tirumankaiyaazhvaar have been placed first in the respective Books. There is no such convention in the arrangement of the Third Book (*Tiruvaaymozhi*) the hymns of which have been composed by the *antaati* manner and so no alteration of the arrangement is possible even if the redactor makes an attempt to do so. But in the Fourth Book (*Iyarpaa*) the first verses of the first three compositions of the First Aazhvaars there is a divine incident behind them. One cannot say that Naathamuni was conscious of these incidents and placed these poems first on their basis; but the existence of these poems as they are at present is only by a sheer accident.

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19. ibid. pp. 204-210.

18. A CRITICAL NOTE ON THE CODIFICATION OF NAALAAYIRAM★

IT is a matter of common knowledge, at least among those who know Tamil, that the '*Naalaayira Divya Prabandham*' or simply '*Naalaayiram*' as it is generally referred to, is an anthology comprising the works of twelve devotees of Vishnu, known as Aazhvaars[1], who share between themselves the three thousand and odd verses which were more the promptings of the heart than intellectual performances. It is also a known fact that these verses were collected and collated by Naathamuni[2] in the manner of the four *Vedas* arranged by Vyaasa and are called *Divya Prabandham* or Tamil *Veda* and that they contain the quintessence of the *Upanishads*. But one is also led to believe that Naathamuni has also followed the anthological tradition of Cankam age.

The earliest anthologies were broadly classified under *Akam* or *Puram* and secular and religious subjects were put

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1. The exact root of the word 'Aazhvaar' is 'aazu' or 'dive' and so the word gets the meaning as 'one who is plunged in God-enjoyment or a diver in divinity'.

2. Prof. K.A. Nilakanta Sastri assigns him to the end of the ninth and the beginning of the tenth century A.D. (Vide his book *The Cholas*—1955 Edition, p. 638). He was born in the year Sobhakrit (823 A.D) according to *Aaraayirappati Guruparampara* (11 (b)) and passed away before 917 A.D., when his grandson Yaamuna was born. The traditional version which mentions him and having lived for 340 years will have to be dismissed as this comes to a clash with the dates arrived at for the Aazhvaars.

together as, for instance, in the *Pattup-paattu* in which *Pattinappaalai* which is purely secular is grouped with *Tirumurukaarruppatai* which is religious. The dominance of anthologies and anthology-making seems to have characterised only the Pre-Pallavan period, but sporadic attempts at anthologising are to be seen in the field of religious literature in the Pallavan and post-Pallavan age, thus continuing an ancient tradition in literature. The *Akam-Puram* dichotomy was practically given up in literature during these ages, and the emphasis was shifted from *species* unity to *genus* unity. In other words, in the age of anthologies, if it could be so called, the *Akam-Puram* distinction was the sole basis of classification. Taking *Pattup-paattu* again, the general theme is *Puram*, but there is fantastic diversity in the subject-matter of the different works like *Kurincip - paattu*, *Mullaip - paattu* and *Pattinap-paalai*. Some of the anthologies would appear to have been made mechanically without strict attention to unity. A critical consideration of the principles of anthology-making in the early period of Tamil literature is as interesting as it is ticklish; and before it is attempted in fullness, only a guess as to the reason for the combination of the different works can be hazarded. The anthologies must have weeded out a number of inferior works and put together only the outstanding ones, and therefore, could not discover as much of the necessary ingredients of unity of subject matter as might perhaps have better justified the proclaimed classification as *Akam* or *Puram*. In the later periods, however, it was possible to deviate from the basis of excellence and combine works with identical themes even if the different works did not demonstrate the same degree of superbness, either in language or thought. The Cankam anthologies paid special attention to beauty and accuracy of language and applicability to common social life on the basis of a pragmatic philosophy. The later anthologists who were very few cared for the unity of the subject-matter and as it concerned only religion in most cases, the language aspect became secondary. The mind and personality of the author is not only reflected

in the work but the work itself conferred upon him social esteem and reverence. Any vagueness of thought in the process of giving verbal form to emotional fullness and ecstasy or the inadequacy of diction was made up for by commentators whose commentaries were more inspired by devotion to the authors for their personal spiritual work than by an attempt to appraise their scholarship.

The two great anthologies of the post-Pallavan period are the Saivite *Tirumurais* and the *Divya Prabandham*, the anthology *par excellence*. The differences between these two anthologies and the Cankam anthologies is obvious. While the *Naalaayiram* certainly continued an earlier literary tradition it was different form, and, from the point of view of the technical aspect of anthology - making, it was perhaps an improvement on the earlier concept of anthology. The unity of the subject is paramount in the *Naalaayiram* in spite of the diversity of authorship and the chronological distance separating each work from others.

There is also another difference which is remarkable between the *Naalaayiram* and the earlier anthologies. While the Ditvya Prabandham is nothing more or nothing less than an anthology from theliterary standpoint, it is often equated with the *Vedas*, and endowed with scriptural status. The same is true in regard to Saivite *Tirumurais*. The Aazhvaars are invested with the sanctity attached to the Vedic Rishis (composers) who, however, chose to remain anonymous. The *Naalaayiram* at least after its codification by Naathamuni, became a book of daily 'paaraayanam' for Vaishnavites in the Tamil country. The sanctity attached to it was such that even Andhras and Kannadigas translated the work in the script of their own languages for their daily 'paaraayanam'.

The pattern of arrangement : One is to know briefly at least in outline the pattern of arrangement of the Four Books of the *Naaalayiram* by Naathamuni called *Mutalaayiram* (The

First Thousand) *Periya Tirumozhi*, *Tiruvaaymozhi* and *Iyar-paa* the first three constituting *Icai-paa* group and the fourth one without any musical form.

Book		*No. of Prabandhams*	*No of verses*
Book	I	9	947
Book	II	3	1134
Book	III	1	1102
Book	IV	10	593
	Total	23	3776

In the above arrangement the absence of 53 verses in Book I to make up 1000 is not usually made much of and the calculation of 1000 is not meant to be arithmatical. The total number of verses in Book II is in excess of 1000, and has to be treated in the same manner as in respect of Book I. Similar treatment Is to be made in respect of Book III. The discrepancy in regard to the total in Book IV is rather more than could be treated with indifference.

The order of arrangement : It is a well-known fact that Naathamuni got into possession of the hymns[3] in no codified form or order. The work of organising the hymns must have taken all the mental equipment and spritual fervour of Naathamuni. There were many approaches open to him like the chronological, the person to person, and sequence of religious topography. But his codification was based on the only objective of providing a scripture in Tamil with a status not inferior to the *Vedas*. This objective required a thorough reshuffle of the *Prabandhams*[4] and reorganization on the basis of the requirements of recitation in temples. His work must have been to some extent facilitated by the Aazhvaars themselves having presented the *paasurems* (verses) inseparably complete in themselves in units of ten, twenty, thirty etc. Naathamuni

3. A hymn is a group of ten or eleven stanzas whereas a verse contains only one stanza.
4. It means here 'poems' and nothing else.

did not take any liberty with these units, but just left them as separate divisions. For instance, each of the units of the First Ten of Tirumankaiyaazhvaar is organized into a division (called Tirumozhi), but each Tirumozhi (consisting of ten or more verses) which is named as a hymn is presently fully in its original form without a further mix-up of verses by diflenent authors. In other words, he did not collect together stray verses from different hymns (Tirumozhis) by the same authors or by different authors just for the reason that they dealt with the same subject. Each hymn has a concluding stanza in which the *phala sruti*[5] is given with the authorship which is an indication that the Tirumozhi is full, and intact. What Naathamuni did was to arrange the hymns into tens (decads) possibly in confirmity with the *Vedic* arrangement of the sooktams.

The purpose of his division and sub-division of the whole work is also to be related to his desire to present a Tamil parallel to the four *Vedas*. First they are intended to be recited like the *Vedas*. The *Saama Veda* being the most pleasing to hear on account of its musical character must have inspired his musical arrangement of the first three Books under the broad category of *Icai-paa*.

There is needless controversy over the possible order in which the Aazhvaars might have composed the hymns. For instance, the question of the order of the *prabandhams* of Tirumankaiyaazhvaar has engendered a lot of heat with very little light at the hands of enthusiastic expositors.[6] But we can easily dismiss the subject of order as purposeless, because

5. The purpose to be attained by reciting the particular unit of stanzas is mentioned in the last stanza of each unit.

6. One section of Vaishnavites hold the opinion that *Periya Ttrumatal* is the last poem sung by the Aazhvaar and according to them the order is *Periya Tirumozhi, Tirukkuruntaantakam, Tirunetuntaantakam, Tiruvezhukkoorrirukkai, Ciriya-Tirumatal,* and *Periya Tirumatal*. This is the order held by Vedanta Desikan. (*Desika Prauandham*—379).According to another section, *Tirunetuutaantakam* is the last poem of the Aazhvaar and their order is : *Periya Tirumozhi, Iirukuruntaantakam, Tiruvezhukkoorrirukkai, Ciriya Tirumatal, Periya Tirumatal,* and *Tirunetunetaantakam* (*Upateca Rana Matai-9*, P.B. Annankaracaryar's Commentary).

the order found in the anthology as organized by Naathamuni and finally fixed as unalterable by Vedaanta Desikan is the order of the anthologists and not of the Aazhvaars.

The place of Raamaanuca-noorrantaati: There is a school of opinion which believes that *Raamaanuca-noorrantaati* forms part of Books IV, *Iyarpaa*. But the opposition to the belief stems from the travesty, arising out of the inclusion of the praise of the human being in the praise of God. Historically the inclusion must be a later-day action as Raamaanuja was later than Naathamuni and the codifiication has been settled by Naathamuni. Naathamuni does not appear to have designed the anthology as an En-Nool. The word 'Naalaayiram' prefixed to *Divya Prabandham* is certainly of later origin; it probably belongs to the Vijayanagar period when a new interest was evinced in Vaishnavism and Vaishnavite literature. The prefix must have originated during the period of Vedaanta Desikan whose last year is belived to be 1371 A.D. or a little later as a Srirangam inscription of his composition would testify.[7] This can be accepted as almost the final answer to the origin of the prefix because for the first time it appears in a statement of Sri Desikan. Tiruvarankat-tamutanaar, the most devoted disciple of Raamaanuja, after composing *Raamaanuca-noorrantaati* had its 'arankerram' (or the formal release) in the presence of Sri Ranganathan, the presiding deity at Srirangam and it was Sri Ranganathan who ordained that this work be included in the *Divya Prabandham*. While there is no doubt about the literary excellence as also the wealth of *bhakti* in the work it is not possible to believe that Sri Raamaanuja could have permitted something in praise of God. However, Paraacara Pattar composed a verse (*thaniyan*) in honour of the Aazhaars which is recited before any compo-

7. Tiruvenkatachari, S : *Madhura Vijayam*, p. 65. (Srirangam inscription composed by Desikan in praise of Goppanna who restored normalcy in the Srirargam temple after the defeat of Madhurai Sultan by Kampanna-II).
8. D. P. 382,383.
9. Cf. *Divya Suri Caritam* (D.S.C.) 18;51,52.

sition of the Aazhvaars is taken up for recital. Raamaanuja's name is included by him along with those of the Aazhvaars. He must have treated Raamaanuja on a par with the Aazhvaars and in all likelihood *Raamauuca-noorrantaati* could have been considered as part of the *Naalaayiram* during the life time of Paraacara Pattar who was born in the year A.D.1122[10] and received the blessiogs of Raamaanuja. He died in his thirty second year. *Raamaanuca-noorrantaati*, in praise of Raamaanuja, could have thoıefore been included in the *Naalaayiram* at least soon after 1137A.D., the date of Raamaanuja's death. Here Raamaanuja is not the author of any Tamil hymn but came to be venerated by Paraacara Pattar giving him the status equal to that of an Aazhvaar. In order to justify this, the composition *noorrantaati* in praise of him by Amutanaar, could have been included in the *Naalaayiram*. The compositions of Aazhvaars were regarded as *Tamil Vedas*. It is but natural that a poem in prarise of Raamaanuja who was treated like an Aazhvaar should get the status of the *Veda* and so included in the *Naalaayiram*. The appellation 'Prapanna gaayatri' lends justifitation to this.

There is another instance of praise of a human being appearing among the Prabandham hymns. It is a composition of Maturakavi in praise of Nammaazhvaar. But the work had already attained classical value and both Nammaazhvaar and Maturakavi were considered as Aazhvaars. Therefore Naathamuni with whom alone we associate the codification chose to include the praise of Namaazhvaar in the *Prabandham*. The story of how Naathamuni came by the hymns of Aazhvaars makes *Kanninun Ciruttaampu*[11] the starting point of the effort to unearth the missing hymns. If that were true, Naathamuni must have had a special reason to include this piece of

10. *Satsampradaaya Muktaavali*, p. 13.
11. This is the composition of Maturakavi consisting of eieven verses. The story that goes is that Naathamuni recited this poem in front of the tamarind tree where the idol of Nammaazhvaar has been installed and pleascd with the devotion of Nathamuni Nammaazhvaar appeared before him along with Maturakavi and revealed all the verses of *Naalaayiram* (D.S.C. XVI 13 to 21; *Guruparampara*, p. 73.)

human praise among the God's prayers and praises. There can, however, be no disputing the fact that after Raamaanuja's passing away the interest in the *Divya Prabandhom* which Raamaanuja himself inspired must have led to a new look at the organization of the *Prabandham.* By the time Sri Desikan's eminenee was established, a little change over the content of the anthology could have already taken place and the *Divya Prabandham* must have got finalised into *Ncalaayira Divya Prabandham*. One wonders if Sri Desikan himself might not have played the role of the second Naathamuni and without taking too much liberty with the Naathamuni's codification regularised the contents by treating the *Raamaanucanoorrantaati* as a definite part of the *Divya Prabandham.* In fact, it is Sri Desikan who presents the first statment in regard to the numbers of verse by the Aazhvaars as also the number of verses in the whole anthology itself as Four Thousand. He also spcifies twenty-four *Prabandhams*[12] inclnding *Raamaanucanoorrantaati.* Either Sri Desikan was repeating a traditional account of numbers or himself furnishing the picture of the final which he had a prominent part.

Vedaanta Desikan's final version: Between Naathamuni and Vedaanta Desikan there must have arisen a new interest in Sri Vaishnavism with its supreme product in Sri Raamaanuja who justly takes the credit as a codifier of the new Tamil Vaishnavism, spade work for which had long before been completed by a number of religious leaders including Naathamuni and Aalavantaar. During the period of Raamaanuja, the old Naathamuni code does not seem to have undergone any change. But during the period of Vedaanta Desikan there was the usual historical process of reaction and recession. By then the Vijayanagar empire had come into existence (A.D. 1336) and with it was renewed the old interest in the *Vedas* and the Vedic study. The *Divya Prabardham* which had for centuries remained the scripture, in a sense, of the Tamil Vaishnavites was now getting alternative status with the original *Vedas*

12. D. P. 383

themselves. Vedaanta Desikan, however, successfully staved off the trend which might have destroyed the status oft he *Prabandham* as scripture if only he had yielded to the temptation to join the movement of reaction. Under his leadership the very last codification must have been effected. This was done without any damage to the Naathamuni code. There are two verses of Sri Desikan indicating this final codification. A free translation of the verse is as follows :

> "If we are to take count of the number of verses of the First Aazhvaars (Poykai, Pootam and Pey) we get 300; Tirumazhicai contributed 216; those of Nammaazhvaar of profound Vedic insight 1296; those of Maturakavi of eminent charity and *guru-bhakti* 11; those of Kulacekara, king of the Vanci country 105; those of Periyaazhvaar, also named Pattanaatan 473; those of Aantaal, a manifestation of Goddess Earth 173; those of Tontaratip-poti 55; those of Tiruppaanaazhvaar 10—to these must be added 1253 verses of Tirumankaiyaazhvaar who was the veritable Death to his enemies and whose hymns sang the glorious praise of the world's Great Father Tiruvenkatamutaiyaan and also those in praise of Yatiraaca (the prince of Yatis) numbering 108 (composed by his worthy disciple Tiruvarankat-tamutanaar."[13]

If the numbers found in these two verses translated together, when added become 4000, the prefix '*Naalaayiram*' seems perfectly justified. But the problem is not so simple at it looks.

The arithmetical statement of Sri Vedaanta Desikan has now to be analysed. The number in respect of all Aazhvaars except Tirumankaiyaazhvaar is correct. There is controversy only over two subjects viz., the number of the two pieces, the *Periya-Tirumatal* and *Ciriya-Tirumatal* and the inclusion of *Raamaanuca-nöorrantaati*. If the *Periya-Tirumatal* and *Ciriya-Tirumatal* are considered as one long poem each and if 108

13. *Ibid*, 382 383.

verses of *Raamaanuca-noorrantaati* are excluded, the total number is 3776 which is the correct number. The additional 224 is got in the following manner:

Periya-Tirumatal is taken as a subject in 78 verses and *Ciriya-Tirumatal* as one in 40 verses. Between these we account for 78+40=118 verses. The *Raamaanuca-noorranaati* contains 108 and the total comes to 226 verses. Sri Vedaanta Desikan thus adds 226 new verses to the number in the Naathamuni code and rounds it off as 4000.[14] There can be no serious objection to this, but for certain criticisms in respect of an arbitrary dissection of one long poem of 297 lines into 78 smaller verses. A poem is a unit by itself and not convenient stoppage of equal length. Both the *Tirumatals* are in *Kalivenpaa* metre which is peculiarly suited to the composition of a single poem of any length. According to conventions of prosody whatever the number of lines or the length, the poem is to be taken as a single unit and not to be dissected into verses. In this light the *Periya-Tirumatal* is just one long poem and dissected into 'verses'. *Ciriya-Tirumatal* is another slightly shorter than the first as the name itself implies. Naathamuni who must have given the names to the two *Matals* to distinguish each has purposely adopted the simple names instead of any name suggestive of the number of verses for the simple reason that he took each *Matal* poem as per rules of prosody. In fact, Naathamuni has no obsession with regard to the total number.

Vedaanta Desikan who made the anthology a definite En-Nool did not wish to exclude the *Raamaanuca-noorrantaati*. So

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14. The calculation is as follows: The total number of verses in the Four Books comes to 3776 (947+1134+1102+593). If the two *Matals* are taken away, the number reduces to 3774; the number is less by 226 to 4000 (4000—3774=226). Then the number 4000 is got by adding 374 and 226 (78+40+108).

he had to provide for 108 verses in his calculation of 4000 and provided 118 to the two *Matals* and made up 4000.[15]

Appillai Aaciriyar, another keen student of the *Divya Prabandham* excluded the *Raamanuca-noorrantaati* from his calculation and instead considered both the *Matals* themselves as consisting of 226verses. According to him the *Periya-Tirumatal* consists of 148½ verses and the *Ciriya-Tirumatal* 77½ verses. His dissection was into kanni couplets and this was not against a common convention, though the counting of each kanni as a verse is not warranted.[16] The author of *Naalaayira Divya Prabandha Akaraati* also follows the principle of dissection in connecting the *Matal* verses.[17]

Now there are two distinct numbers 3776 and 4000 and three approaches. Sri Desikan's version seems to be the most acceptable and final. Even to-day the inclusion and non-inclusion of *Raamaanuca-noorrantaati* is a disputed issue though no irreverance is implied. In fact, whether included or not within the anthological system, *Raamaanuca-noorrantaati* is given a place of honour as a separate section in every edition of *Divya Prabandham*. It is also recited along with the other hymns in all Vaishnavite temples. It could be concluded with the statement that no bones can be made about the arithmatical accuracy in respect of numbers. Even if a few verses are wanted to make up 4000 what is of essence is not the arithmetical accuracy in literature, but the com-

15. The inclusion of human praise in a book of prayers to God was done on the basis of a spiritual belief. Raamaanuja was considered an *avataara* of Aatisesha and the praise of Aatisesha is appropriate amidst praises of Sri Narayana whose bed the Aatisesha is. Nammaazhvaar is also considered an *avataara* of Vishvaksena and the inclusion of his praise by Mathurakavi is also justifiable. Vedaanta Destkan invested the inclusion of his praise by Maturakavi is also justifiable. Vedanta Deslkan invested the inclusion with the seal of his approval to neutralise the vehemence of the objection to its inclusion.

16. The calculation according to Appillai Aaciriyar is as follows: The total cxmber of verses in the Four Books comes to 3776. The number reduces to 3774 by taking away the *Maotals*. Total number of kanni couplets = 148½ + 77½ = 226. Then we have 4,000 by adding 3774 and 226.

17. Pp, 26—28: 41 and 43.

pleteness of each idea. The *Divya Pradcrdham* does not suffer in this respect. The number 'Aayiram' has been considered very auspicious by the Hindus. Any thing slightly less or in excess of it is also taken as 'Aayiram'. Thus 1008 names of Vishnu are called 'sahasranaamam'. The *Purusha-sooktam* begins with the verse "Sahasra Sirsa Purushaha, Sahraksha etc."[18] We could overlook the fact of *Tiruvcay-mozhi* consisting of 1102 verses by accepting its classification as an 'Aayiram' by the author himself.[19] The *Periya Tiru-mozhi* also containing 1084 verses gets the title *'Marai Per-Aayiram'*, 'Aayiram' etc. from its author.[20] Therefore it is a nothing wrong in imagining that each book contains 1000 verses and the four books 4000.

The problem of Tirup-pallaantu : There is another interesting problem in regard to the 'Pallaantu' part of *Periyaazhvaar Tirumozhi*. According to some, it should be treated as a separate *Prabandham* and not as a part within another *Prabandham*. Again, such an attempt is only intellectual gymnastics and nothing serious is involved in it. Perhaps for a scientific reason we might say that Pallaantu cannot be a separate *Prabandham* and must be considered just as the first part of the first Tirumozhi which should be considered to have ten parts collectively called 'Pattu' (decad). As it is, the first part is the *Tiruppallaantu* and the Tirumozhi itself commences as the second *Prabandham* separately. The first Pattu (decad) in this arrangement is really nine because of the exclusion of the *Tiruppallaantu*, considered as a separate P*rabandham*. While there is nothing wrong in separating the *Tiruppallaantu,* the organization of the work suffers to some extent by its exclusion. Even at the commencement the equal division into ten Tirumozhis is affected and only nine have to be designated as a 'Pattu' (Ten). The pattern of division of each *Prabandham* into ten

18. *Rg Veda*, *10.90*:1.
19. *TVM* 1.1:11; 1.3:11:1:11; 1.6:11 etc.
20. *Periya Tm.* 1.5:10.

Tirumozhis each is common to the works of Periyaazevaar, Tirumankaiyaazhvaar and Nammaazhvaar which share the common connotation Tirumozhi. This seems to be some kind of an application of an organizational pattern adopted in the *Vedas*. The *sooktam* of the *Rg Veda* may be considered the genesis of the concept of Tirumozhi. A *sooktam* is not a *sootra* but a reasoning complete in itself. Its form is more elaborate than the aphoristic *sootra*. In the same way, in each Tirumozhi there are a unmber of verses (or stanzas) though ordinarily even this number is to be restricted to ten. But this restriction is not strictly by the Aashvaars. Those who argue that Periyaazhvaar's First Ten did not include the *Tiruppallaantu* 'arrived at ten as the exact number of Tirumozhis totalled up all the verses in the nine Tirumozhis excluding the *Tiruppallaantu* and got to hundred which they argued should be correct quantity for ten Tirumozhis at ten verses each. But while this approach may serve the purpose of an argument to explain away a difficult position, it fails to take note of the unity of the Ten.

In the *Periya Tirumozhi* of Tirumankaiyaazhvaar and in the *Tiruvaaymozhi* of Nammaazhvaar the *sooktan-like* Tirumozhis are arranged as a series of Tens without any numerical inaccuracy. In the *Naacciyaar Tirumozhi* of Aantaal the arrangement into Tens has not been adopted, because of the inadequate number of Tirumozhis. The traditional belief is that division into Tens is called for only when there is a material for more than two Tens. The *Naacciyaar Tirumozhi* does not satisfy this principle.

The *Tiruppallaantu* part is considered separate also on the basis of eminent authority. In the *Upatecaratnamaalai*[21] of Manavaalamaamunikal the reference to Periyaazhvaar is in association with his having been the author of the *Tiruppal-*

21. *Upatecaratnamaalai*, 16,19,20.

laantu. In the same work the *Tiruppallantu* is mentioned as the ancient or Aati *Tiruppallaantu*, an artistic work without a parallel. One need not be led away by the overwhelming praise of the *Tiruppallaantu* and invest it with a separateness for this reason. That the *Tiruppallaantu* is an excellent piece of composition in the richness of its devotional fervour, nobody denies. The question is whether it should be treated as a separate *Prabandham*. The volume of opinion leans on the side of its being an integral part of the First Ten. Those who would make it a separate *Prabandham* are swayed by its superior quality as a hymn and its abstract form contrasted with the anecdotal hymns that follow in the First Ten. But it is objectionable in taking the *Tiruppallaantu* Tirumozhi of the First Ten as indicating the subject matter of the other nine Tirumozhis which is the story of Lord Krshna's boyhood. The references in *Upatecaratnamaalai* do not imply separate *Prabandham* status for the *Tiruppallaantu* but equate it with the *Vedic pranavam* or *Om* which is an auspicious beginning for anything. The fact that the *Tiruppallaantu* is the beginning of every recitation of any *Prabandham* in the *Naalaayiram* only shows its greatness and not separateness. The *Tiruppallaantu* has become the *Poorvaanga* of every auspicious recitation and epitomises the entire substance of the First Ten. Much credence need not be placed on *Upatecaratnamaalai* whose purpose is entirely different from evaluating the *Divya Prabandham*. It is purely a source of information about the date of birth and place of the Aazhvaars. Therefore a casual statement in it about the *Tiruppallaantu* need not be made much of.[22] Periyavaaccan Pillai (1168-1263 A.D.) who is held to belong to a school which is opposed to that of Vedaanta Desikan has treated *Tiruppallaantu* as a hymn which forms part of *Periyaazhvaar Tirumozhi*.[23]

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22. D.S.C. also refers to the two compositions of Periyaashvaar,(verse76)
23. *Tiruppallaantu Vyakyaanam*, (Kanchipuram, 1909), p. 24.

The number of Rrapandhams : The number of *Prabandhams* has been taken to be twenty-four. This is arrived at in two different ways. One is to exclude the *Tiruppallaantu* from the list of *Prabandhams* and include the *Raamaanuca-noorrantaati*; another is to exclude *Raamaanuca-noorrantaati* from the list and give separate status to *Tiruppallaantu*. Vedaanta Desikan must have considered the *Tiruppallaantu* as part and parcel of the First Ten because he ideludes *Raamaanuca noorrantaati* among the *prabandhams*. The division into twenty four is long accepted and therefore there need be no controversy about it.

19. THE PLACE OF MINOR CHARACTERS IN KAMBARAAMAAYANAM—A STUDY.*

Introduction : Perhaps we are not quite right in classifying the characters of any epic into minor and major. all characters in a plot have equal importance and no character should be judged solely with reference to the frequency of appearance and to the degree of stupendity of the actions. The purpose of an epic is to hold the mirror upto the universe and "it takes all sorts" to make an epic. In some plots some one outside the cast plays the most significant role like, for instance, the *Asareeri*[1] in the Krishna story. True, for purposes of convenience those characters that appear more frequently than the rest in plot are cared for more than those whose entrances and exits are few and far between. The heroes and the heroines of a great theme are letter rememdered than those that contribute in other ways to the consummation of the theme. A critical analysis of any plot should pe faulty without the various roles being assessed dispassionately and the unity of the plotbeing discovered not solely on the basis of the achievement or the accomplishment of a few major characters but those of all the characters put together.

The Epic Purpose: The writer of an epic is a creator. He creates a cosmos on the pattern of the larger cosmos created

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1. A voice heard from the Heavens, the speaker being invisible,

by God. His work has a definite purpose like the cosmic purpose. Even as in the fulfilment of the cosmic purpose every created being is assigned a role and plays that role (which Hindu philosophers call karma). In an epic there have to be a number ef characters that must promote the epic purpose. The epic itself, being a miniature universe, involves the use of many types, *motifs*, and varieties of human characters. Situations are created so that each type might manifest and reveal itself. In this sense the epic is a reflection of the universe. There may be great heroes like Raama, or anti-heroes like Raavana; there may be "Cromwells, guiltless of their country's blood" or, in some cases, "full many a gem" of "minor" characters whose glory the world may forget to sing, but all the same is not any the less than that of those whom the world has chosen to cherish in its memory.

In Kamban the unity of the plot is wonderfully achieved by the most judicious utilisation of certain characters other than the hero and the heroine and these characters seek to interpret and elucidate the epic purpose as well as the main characters. What is the epic purpose itself? It is to show that righteousness ultimately triumphs over unrighteousness, *dharma* over *adharma*. Raama, Sita, Lakshmana, Bharata and Kausalya may be the very embodiment of righteousness; but it is not possible to make an epic with these characters alone. Characters like Hanuman, Sugreeva. Jataayu and Jaambavaan and others must be there to show that the world is not all evil and to spread the gospel of righteousness by the various deeds they perform by way of supporting the "major" characters. In Kamban, one might discover that the epic purpose of making *dharma* triumph is broadcast as by apostles by the various minor characters that are in league with Raama. Even those that are on the side of unrighteousness as the result of certain circumstances are made to realise that the path they are treading would land them in trouble unless they are will-

ing to perceive the true path. Jataayu is a very "minor" character. One might think that the epic would not have suffered by the non-inclusion of this bird-king. But Jataayu's purpose is to show that righteousness was not dead and that characters like Raavana could not delude themselves into the notion that their creed alone was extant and all other creeds were extinct. Jataayu's part is played at a very important point in the story, that is, when Raavana was carrying Sita away to Lanka, Sita cries out for succour and Jataayu immediately offers to resist Raavana. In the fight that ensues between and Raavana Jataayu, Jataayu is mortally wounded. Jataayu's mission is, according to Kamban, to remind Raavana that the forces of righteousness would be against him if he would not give up his sinister practices and methods. This is preaching *dharma* to the very embodiment of *adharma* itself but the cosmos of the poet envisages only one righteous world made out of not only those that are righteous but of those that have strayed from the path of righteousness. Jataayu gives the first chance to Raavana to correct himself. In the *Yuttakaantam* Raama pays a glowing tribute to Jataayu in which he says that Jataayu sacrificed his life to vindicate righteousness which is his own creed.[2]. In this wise each one of those on the side of the hero seems to be an apostle of righteousness exemplified in Raama.

A String of Patterns—Epic action : Kamban has achieved unparalleled success in exemplifying the different human patterns through different characters. The 'minor'' 'characters are fitted into the plot so masterfully that the structure of the plot does not suffer from a superfluity of useless characters. The manner in which he maintains a correct sense of proportion reflects a great deal on his artistry. The epic will suffer greatly even if a single character were to be removed on the ground that not great purpose is being served by that character. Each one of the

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2. *Aran unakku aavan vanji, anjal* = I shall be your protector, fear not. (K. R. Yuttakaatam Veetanan. ataikkalap. 116)

haracters, in addition to reiterating the epic purpose, serves o push the action of the story of its conclusion. The nomentum that the story receives from each may vary; but the characters have a duty to see that that the plot does not get stuck anywhere. Mantharai for instance provides the greatest momentum. In fact it is she that starts the whole epic action and though she disappears from the context after the exile of Raama it is her machinations that set forth a series of chain reactions und culminate in the Raama-Raavana war. Manthara is a "minor" eharactēr in the ordinary evaluation; but hers' is a major contribution to the action of the story. Kamban's insights into human psychology are beautifully brought out in that section dealing with Mantharais conversion of Kaikeyee. Kaikeyee has all along been an affectionate mother to Raama, devoted wife to Dasaratha and a pleasing type of queen in the palace. To infect her with poison enough to get Raama banished is a feat of which Mantharai alone is capable. This particular portion of the story is most difficult to handle as it marks a very great turn in the mind of Kaikeyee without which the epic action would become static. It is easy for any poet to toy with the theme, handle it clumsily and yet try to create impression that the epic has been pushed forward. Kumban as an artist excels himself in the delicate way in which he handles the whole episode.[3] In Vaalmeeki *Raamaayana* the story is a little drawn out though one has to acknowledge that great artistic skill has been expended on the episode by the Sanskrit poet. Kamban's subtle workmanship can be seen the way in which Manthrai is screened from public indignation; and it is made to appear as though Kaikeyee herself had changed into a heartless power-grabber that she appeard to be in the eyes of Dasaratha and the rest of the world.

The Mantharai episode serves to show that in a great epic the beginnings are the least awe-inspiring and exciting. Upto the Mantharai episode it is the story of a king who had

3. *K.R. Aoyd. Man. Coozh.* 43.84

four sons who were all accomplished in every way and the king himself was most happy in the midst of his valorous sons and beautiful queens. The Viswaamitra interlude secures for the princes their brides. It cannot be considered in any way as furthering the epic action. Between the birth of the four sons and the exile of Raama, the most important contribution to epic action is made by Mantharai. But who is Mantharai? An old ugly-looking hunch-back whom the world by any stretch of imagination would never have suspected of having the potentialities for the kind of mischief which results in a series of great events and ultimately end in a conflagration with two creeds in confict. Vaalmeeki and Kamban have, through Mantharai, provided a suspense to the whole plot which after the exile of Raama deals with characters who are the opposite of Mantharai in valour, status, and reputation. The portion up to the Mantharai episode has been presented in such terms that there could be no suspicion of the great things to come after the exile and the great personalities that were going to figure in the epic. This way of epic presentation adds to its grandeur and opens the gates of wonder to the readers.

The so-called main characters of a plot are distinguished by their having to bear the brunt of the main action. They have to live the full story; and the inner workings of their mind guide them through courses of action which supply the main features of the plot. Their character, their emotional make-up, their ways of thinking and their whole personality are revealed through their action. At the same time it has to be remembered that the minor characters of a plot help to reveal the whole personality of the main characters both by their affliation to their creed and philosophy of life and by explicit utterances in some context or other. In Kamban the hero and the heroine have their best interpreters in such characters as Viswaamitra, Angatha, Jataayu, Maareecha and Guha. Viswaamitra is the first to reveal the hero to his doting parents, to the world outside and to *himself*. Unti

the arrival of Viswaamitra, Raama is just the fond child of his parents. Even Vasishta does not seem to have realised fully the great part that Raama is to play even as a teen-ager. Viswaamitra impresses every one as one with a mission. Kamban's portrayal of Viswaamitra is that of a person who in his righteous indignation would not mind even courting the wrath of the gods.[4] Viswaamitra's mission is clear. It is to wipe out all the evils of the world and in this he seeks the help of Raama. He succeeds in convincing Dasaratha that Raama is not the child that he might appear to a parents' doting eyes, but one who is to distinguish himself by heroic deeds, not for the sake of demonstrating his physical prowess but for the sake of exterminating the forces of evil. Viswaamitra is cleverly portrayed by Kamban as the preceptor to the Brahmin-born Vasishta when he is made to dwell on the capabilities of Raama. Vasishta's support to Viswaamitra's demand is the result of having listened to Viswaamitra's exposition of Raama.[5]

The role that Viswaamitra plays in revealing Raama to *himself* is most striking. The killing of Thaataka, the redemption of Ahalya and the breaking of Siva's bow, should have made Raama realise what he was and what he was for. In Kamban Raama is not treated as a human mortal but as an incarnation of God, and Viswaamitra and many other characters are made to revel in the divine presence of Raama. Viswaamitra knows that he is dealing not with an immature lad but with the very manifestation in human form of the Lord Himself.

Among others who reveal the great personality of the hero and his divinity is Angatha the son of Vaali. In a most exquisite verse Angatha gives Raavana the following information about Raama.

> "I have been sent here by the Lord of Elements, the Lord of the Earth surrounded by waters, the Lord of Sita

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4. *Ibid. Pala. Kaiyatai*-3

5. ibid-14

and the Lord of Lords, the Lord of the Hymns (*Veda*) that you yourself are fond of chanting and the arbiter of Destinies; I am here as His messenger to communicaste to you what I have been directed to communicate."[6]

Maareecha is one of the opposite camp but he knows Raama's divine qualities. He is also used by Kamban to sing the glory of Raama though not as a member of Raama's camp, but as one whose loyalty to Raavana prevents a more direct form of *Raama-Anubhava*.

Guha is the apostle of Raama *par excellence*. Kamban's delineation of Guha's character is without a parallel. Guha ferrying Raama across the Ganges makes one amused when one reflects that He who ferries all his creations across life's journey is himself ferried across the waters of the Ganges. Guha's elevation to the status of a fifth brother to Raama is an evidence of the emphasis that the epic wishes to place on righteousness and Kamban more than Vaalmeeki makes the Guha episode the occasion for elucidating the epic purpose.[7]

Another very important role that the minor characters play in the epic is that they heighten the dramatic effect of the story. Kamban is sometimes credited with a more austere approach to epic writing than even Vaalmeeki. He is reputed to have eliminated the more frivolous and maintained a level of austerity which is conspicuous by its absence in Vaalmeeki. We may agree with all this but at the same time we must realise that Kamban does not totally dismiss the dramatic element from his epic. He makes use of such characters as Coorpanaka, Angatha, Taara and Neelamaalai for providing the melodramatic effect. In the Coorpanaka interlude, for instance, the exchanges between Raama and Coorpanaka, are couched in the most dramatic expressions. One might take the Coorpanaka episode out of the pages of

6. *Ibid. Yutta-Angatan Toothu-21*
7. *Ibid. Veetanan, Ataikkal-146*

Kamban, and without any serious emendation, dramatise it in the poet's own words. The interview of Angatha is full of cynicism, criticism, admonition, warning, threat, coaxing and counselling. Angatha rises to his full stature in the presence of Raavana and for a while stuns him with his dauntless demeanour. Neelamaalai, Kamban's own creation, serves a very useful purpose. She is a study in psychology. She makes her *debut* just when Sita is doubtful as to whether it is Raama whom she has seen already who has broken the bow or some one else. The dramatic part of the story lies in the suspense which gets hold of Sita and its being cleared by Neelamaalai. Neelamaalai permits herself to ignore and forget all rules of palace decorum and for a while becomes a chum of Sita when she breaks the news that the person whom Sita has seen the day before is the person who has broken the bow. This departure from Vaalmeeki has been effected in a most artistic and purposeful way by Kamban.

In Kamban every piece of villainy or cruelty is accomplished in the presence of, or with the knowledge of a witness. The idea of a foul deed being witnessed and attested to by a person seems to be the result of the peculiar Hindu conviction that no perpetrator of evil deed will go scot-free and that what one might imagine is being accomplished secretly in the dark is really witnessed by many. Some of the characteres in Kamban perform the function of witness in this sense. Maareecha is confided in in the Sita-abduction plan. Vibeeshana is a witness to the way Sita is spending the period of her incarceration in *Asoka Vanama*, Jataayu is a witness to Raavana's abduction of Sita. Thirichadai is a witness to the indecent approaches and overtures which Raavana makes to Sita in Lanka.

Conclusion : In conclusion, it might be repeated that the so-called "minor" characters are as necessary for epic development as the major characters. It makes a heavy

demand on the poet's ingenuity and the artistic skill to time their entrances and exits. Sometimes Shakespere is found fault with for dismissing characters unceremoniously. It must be said to the credit of Kamban that there is no superfluous character and none without a purpose related to the larger epic purpose. Sometimes poets and playwrights in their enthusiasm for the major characters do less than adequate justice to the supporting characters with the result that the critics are landed in trouble when trying to size up the supporting characters. Kamban's characters are not blurred images admitting of speculation as to their personality and purpose but clear personages whose identity, mission, action and emotional make-up are beyond the shadow of a doubt.

20. MEDICAL REFERENCES IN TAMIL LITERATURE★

THE literature of any country is the mirror of the life and culture of the people and their aspirations. The Tamils had a hoary past with a vastness of territory and an abundance of literature, which by the several cataclysms of Nature and of ravages of Time have been lost but for a few remnant that have been saved. The oldest of them—the Cankam Classics—is accepted on all hands to be about three milleniums old. Such of these and the others that have been produced by subsequent poets and those that followed to the present times form the basis of our literary stock. Next only to Sanskrit, Tamil is fortunate enough to have preserved an ancient literatuie and also a literary tradition going beyond the period of this literature thus recovered from oblivion.

In the vast body of Tamil literature clear medical references are available. Under the system of *Gurukula* and apprenticeship it was undoubtedly a prominent aspect of the educati nal set-up during the period, and all the reputation of the later-day physicians shouid be attributed to their belonging to a great tradition that had commenced many centuries earlier. The science of *Ayurveds* is no doubt an all-India one in the sense that the ancient *Ayurveda* texts are found all over India in Tamil and Sanskrit. Most of these

★ Paper Contrilbuted to Souvener on Native Medicines, Hyderabad.

texts are patently of later-day origin in spite of misleading prefatory verses attributing them to Siva, Agastya or some other legendary luminary. But the Agastya tradtion which has reference to the earliest period of Tamil literature mentions the Agastya of the Cankam fame as the father of the Tamil medicine. *Noy* was the general name given to disease, and *maruntu* was the name given to medicine; and from this was derived the name *maruttuvan,* denoting the person practising medicine. The exponent (or teacher) of medicine was called *maruttuva-noolon*.

The existence of texts in medicine is testified to by the references both in the literature and their commentaries. Agastya and eighteen Cittars are credited with having written dependable texts on medicine, and some scholars even believe that some of them are extant.[1] There is a mention of a great treatise called *Vaakatam* by one Vaakataacarya and the work was so exhaustive and authoritative that the term 'Vaakatam' itself began to have the meaning of medicine.[2] Several titles on Medicine, diseases and their treatment under the general name 'Sarabendra Vaidyamurai' have been published by the Saraswath Mahāl Library, Thañjāvoor. They deal mainly with the principles of *Ayurveda* followed by the Dhanvaatry Mahaal, the Medical Institute of Serfoji Mahaaaaja and many tested prescriptions and recipes for stomach troubles, for women's and children's diseases, for anaemia and jaundice, for asthma and cough and so on of the Institute. All of them seem to be of later-day works.

The medicine that developed in the Tamil country was mostly herbal.Herbal research must have been constantly going on to sustain the system of medicine. The stupendous work of

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1. None of the Ayurvedic texts extant seems to be genuine either in respect of its antiquity or of its authorship. Most of the works are still in manuscript form available in the Oriental Manuscript Library Madras, and the Saraswathi Mahaal Library, Thanjaavoor. But in opinion of the author of this paper all these Tamil treatise on Medicine are products of the last three or four centuries.
2. The works of Vaakaaacaarya are lost to us.

research with all herbs, from trees, plants, grasses, roots and fungi can be understood from the hundreds of names of herbs mentioned in *Ayurvedic* works cf a later day. That we have lost much of that great system today must be acknowledged from our inability to identify most of the herbs. Maybe, many of these names were professional coinages, and to take them literally and prescribe any *Ayurvedic* medicine is to ask for wanton risk to life. Teraiyar, perhaps a Cittar, who was a great physician of the past is credited with having prepared an exhaustive list of herbs with their medicinal properties. Even today there are several valuable herbs available both in the Western Ghats and Eastern Ghats of South India and many of the herbs are not available in other parts of India; they cannot be grown in any other couutry. Even now there are certain knowledgeable persons like Thiru G.D. Naidu, the mysterious man of Coimbatore, who can identify certain rare plants. Thiru G.D. Naidu presented one dried plant, called *catacanjeevini* before a mammoth audience at the time of the Second world Tamil Conference held at Madras (January, 1968). He put it in boiling water and to the surprise of all many roots grew from I mm to 20 mm and the leaves also became green as though they were tender, fresh leaves. He also mentioned other herbs such as *raamapaanam*, *mayooracaki*, and *nanna* which also would turn green in boiling water without the roots growing. He also told the audience that very efficient drugs to cure Diabetes, Leucorrhoea, Cancer, Leprosy, Asthma etc. can be prepared from those herbs.

There is one chapter on Medicine in the well-khown *Tirukkural*.[3] Here the importance of maintaining a healthy body is emphasized and the methods of treating diseases are pointed out. According to Tiruvalluvar, of all the various embodied existences of the soul, to be born with the human

3. Chapter, 95.

body is the rarest and the most precious heritage. It is therefore extremely necessary to maintain this precious gift in a healthy state free from disease. Diseases to which the body is subject may be of two categories: first, according to the traditional terminology, there are congenital diseases which may be due to heredity or the previous *karma*. Secondly, it may be due to personal indiscretion such as over-eating, over-working etc. The second category of diseases are avoidable one. Hence the person is bound to maintain his life in such a way as to avoid the diseases born of personal indiscretion in order to discharge his duties satisfactorily and secure happiness here and hereafter. But if he could not avoid diseases and if he be subject to them, the only way open to him is to get rid of these diseases by securing proper medicine. Hence the significance of the title of this chapter in the famous Tamil work.

First the poet sets forth the causes for diseases. According to the Tamil system of medicine, the health of the body is maintained by the harmonious blending of the three humours in the body, namely, wind, bile and phlegm. If any one becomes more intense or below the normal it causes its appropriate disease.[4] Tiruvalluvar says maintenance of good health depends upon the eating habits of a person. According to him regular habits of eating only will maintain harmony and equilibrium of the three humours. No medicine is necessary for a person who eats after assuring himself that what he has already eaten has been digested.[5] A person ean easily ascertain this condition by his bodily symptoms. When he has the appetite of hunger and experiences general weakness of the body, he can easily infer that his body requires nourishment and so he has to refresh himself.

4. Kural, 941.
5. ibid 942.

Moderation in eating is the first principle for maintenance of good health. In order to liue a healthy long life with the body and prolong the life of the embodied soul, one must be careful to eat in suitable measure only after the previously eaten food is well digested.[6] Over-eating even when there is appetite would be deleterious to the body. It is always safer to eat a little less than to eat a little more. The poet further imposes desirable conditions step by step on the eater. He should wait for complete digestion and the appearance of hunger. Hunger assures that the previously eaten food has been well digested. One must be careful enough to choose the quality of the food that is wholesome and agreeable to the body.[7] "When wholesome food is eaten with self restraint" says the poet, "then there is no danger or disester to one's life through bodily diseases"[8] The emphasis here is that even if the food is agreeable it is always good to eat a limited quantity. By the observance of this principle one can avoid diseases likely to cause suffering and death.

The poet then points out the evil consequences arising out of not adhering to moderation or self-restraint. When a person knows that he is hungry and eats food that is agreeable to him in a limited quantity, he has quite secure his joy of health. On the other hand a glutton who eats voracicely will have disease secure in his body.[9] To the former, happiness is sure; in the latter painful disease is sure. A person who does not carefully discern the digestive capacity of his body and who, guided by his own perverse taste, eats to his full satiation in utter disregard of the principles of health, will be afflicted with innumerable diseases and disorders.[10]

6. ibid 943.
7. ibid 944.
8. ibid 945.
9. ibid 946.
10. ibid 947.

The science of diagnosis seems to have developed to a noticeable extent. We have names of many diseases as if from a system of classification. There is a reference to this diagnosis in *Tirukkural*. According to the poet, a doctor or physician by careful examination of the patient must first diagnose the nature of his disease, find out its cause, dicide the proper method for its cure and then he must adopt the appropriate treatment faithfully.[11] The various steps in the diagnosis have also been mentioned. Says the poet: "A physician well acquainted with the medical science must carefully study the condition of his patient, ascertain the nature of the disease in him and its duration and then undertake the treatment".[12] Studying the nature of the patient implies understanding his bodily strength, his intelligence, the intensity of his suffering through disease, because medicine must be administered appropriate to these conditions. Ascertaining the nature of the disease implies knowing its intensity, its curability or ortherwise by a perticular medicine and so on. Choosing the proper dose of medicine depends upon the accurate knowledge of the symptoms of the disease. Similarly its duration must also be known.

The nature of the treatment is also mentioned by the poet. The treatment, according to him, implies the four elements, namely, the patient, the physician, the medicine and the nurse who attends on the patient. Each of these has four characteristics. The commentator Parimelalzhakar explains these aspects in a detailed manner. The four quatities of the patient are: (1) he must have enough money to meet the medical bill; (2) he must behave exactly as he is instructed by his physician; (3) he must be intelligent enough to report the condition of the disease; and (4) he must have sufficient courage to withstand the pain, if any, arising in the treatment. The four quaiities of the physician are: (1) he must have the courage to have a close study of

11. ibid 948.
12. ibid 949.

the disease ; (2) he must have fully acquainted with the science of medicine learnt from his master and must be an expert in the art of diagnosis ; (3) he must enthusiastically continue his practice of medicine : and (4) he must be pure in heart, word and deed. The four qualities of the medicine are ; (1) it must be a sure remedy to various allied deseases; (2) it must be palatable and wholesome in its concentration and effect ; (3) it must be easily available ; and (4) it must have a reputation of being a sure remedy. The four qualities of the nurse ; (1) he must have sympathy and affection towards the patient ; (2) he must be pure at heart and in speech and frank towards the patient ; (3) he must strictly carry out the instructions of the physician ; and (4) his behaviour to the patient must be firm and intelligent. Cure is unthinkable unless the four elements with their respective four qualities are obtained in full co-oparation.

References to certain concrete cases of treatment are also available in the literature. Maruttuvan Taamotaranaar[14] in a verse of his on *Tirukkural* gives a recipe for a headache remedy as follows : the juice of *Ceentil creeper* (a herb) mixed with sugar and powdered dry ginger and honey. if inhaled, will drive out a headache.[15] In the *Raamaayana* of Kamban, there is a verse supposed to be spoken by king Dasaratha who descends from the other world to congratulate Raama on his killing of Raavana. In it Desaratha expresses his relief at the magnet of Raama's bosom, now embraced by Dasaratha, automatically pulling out the iron arrow of Kaikeyiee's demand which has been till that moment, for so long, rankling in his heart. One could discern here the principle of the magnetic attrattion being used in modern surgery, as for instance, in drawing out iron particles from the human eyes.[16] A stanza

13. ibid 950.
14. Tamil poets with '*Marruttuva*' title prefixed to their names were either physicians or members of the physicians' families taking to versifying as their hobby.
15. *Tiruvalluva Malai-11*
16. K.R. Yuttakaantam-Meetchi—118.

in the epic *Ceevakacintaamani* outlines all the oberations of mid wifery to be performed to a new-born infant immediat-ely after birth such as cleaning the nostrils, the mouth and the eyes and ears. [17]

There are indications of surgery : [18] but it should be too much to imagine that the science of anatomy was so thorou-ghly mastered as to permit of such precise surgery as is possible today. But superficial wounds or boils were easy of incision and surgical treatment, with the chances of *sepsis* always there, depending on the degree of cleanliness of the hands of the surgeon and the instruments used.

Attention was also paid to mental diseases. The mind-body unity was well understood, and the action of the one on the other was known. The way the children were brought up, the way the defeatist mentlity and frustration were sought to be removed in those days would be token awareness of mental hygiene to a very appreciable degree.

The practice of chanting *Mantra* in curing the diseases was not popular during the early period, and a disease was a disease and needed nothing less than diagnosis and direct remedy. In later times, with religion dominating life at every turn and in every detail, *Mantra* secured respectability with medicine, and sometimes it was the last resort if medi-cines failed.

17. Ceevaka—2703.
18. K.R. Yuddha Kaatam—Kumpakarunan vathai—146
Peru. Tm. 5:4

SECTION : 3

History, Education and Culture

21. INSTITUTIONS OF POPULAR CULTURE IN THE ANCIENT TAMIL COUNTRY★

IT is a matter of common knowledge that being literate and scholarly is one thing and being cultured is another. In the ancient Tamil country, being cultured was no doubt the *sine quo non* of each and every individual ; but being literate and scholarly was the privilege of the few. Notions like Universal education and Universal literacy are essentially modern, and have developed out of the peculiar needs of complicated political systems. To the simple folks ofthe past, what was needed in a majority of cases was the ability to get on with others. Scholarship was needed only for professional scholars. But the large masses of the people needed an irreducible minimum of knowledge about men and matters without being acquainted with the symbols and skills of formal scholarship. The art of human relations was an art that needed no formal schooling but was acquired in a direct manner. People learnt to move with others by moving with them, by obeserving those that knew it already and profitting by elderly experience. The home was the training ground in good manners, social etiquette and public decorum. The members of the family consituted a small setting in which these aspects of human relations could be inculcated as and when real situations arose.

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Cultural education was, therefore, by way of provision of worthwhile experiences and knowledge that would help the large masses of the people to participate in social transactions and domestic responsibilties with an intelligent understanding of how to make participation most effective. It was also a means of removing wrong attitudes and unhealthy idiosyncrasies. It was achieved through the interaction of the scholarly element and non-scholarly element of the population. The scholarly element devised diferent media and agencies for the education of the common folk. Certain institutions had also been developed as an integral part of common community life through which massсs secured an improvement of their mind.

Certain Important Items: There were certain items of knowledge about which there could be no option to the people to have it or not to have it. The most important of these consisted of the periodical orders, instructions and announcements by the governments to the people. Ashoka was, perhaps, the first king of India to have reduced these to writing, and got writing itself effected on stones so that it might last until eternity.[1] Though writing had been invented in the Tamil country two or three centuries before Christ, the government depended mostly on the method of oral communication for making public announcements. There were special officers for makiug public announcements of an important nature.[2] Among the items of announements were festivals and battles. Probably many other items were also handled by those officers. The officers were called '*ceyti valluvar*'. They made announcements by the beating of drums. One of these officers *Ceyti valluvar perumcaattan* was distinguished post also. Incidentally, the concept of *Ceyti* is really Interesting as one more instance of social maturity of the people.

Feasts and Festivals: These constituted a significant learning set-up for the masses. The few festivals that

1. The Ashokan rock edicts. The Tmail alphabet is said to have been evolved in the third century B.C.
2. *Puram*—9

were celebrated during this period provided occasions for the interaction of the different communities. Festivals were cooperative projects, and their celebration was the occasion for groups of people to plan together and work together. It was not just a mere group of people who were involved. It was a number of professional communities interacting and cooperating with the common people. The artists, the artisans, the musicians, the priests, the merchants and officers of governments worked together to make the festivals what they were inteded to be. The masses of the people thus got an opportunity to know about the professional communites and their work, to appreciate their contribution to social welfare and happiness, and to gain a common sense understanding of what each profession was about.

The interaction of people during occasions of festivity made for better knowledge of the world and better understanding of others. New knowledge was gained through seeing, through hearing, through speaking, through feeling, through discussing, through contemplating and through many other ways. Verily, festivals were a sobering influence.

Perhaps the most important value of a festival was its being the means of an inclucation of a sense of reverence for moral values and principles. The festsval was necessarily focussed on deity, and the strict austere life that the people enforced on themselves within the temple presented the picture of a code of right conduct socilised. The atmosphere during the festival did not permit any evil thought or action in anybody. The presence of the deity installed in a central place within the temple, the musical choral chanting of the scriptural hymns, the performance of worships by the priests, the serenity imported into the atmosphere—all these had the effect of forcing even the fools who came to scoff to remain to pray. The religious fervour developed the minds of men and women though these festivals had a transfer value in social life. Honesty and integrity, regard for truth, purity in

thought, word and deed, a philanthrophic attitude, an attitude of give and take, respect for others' feelings, sympathy with suflering fellow human beings, love for others, love for all ereated beings iucluding the dumb creatures, the desire to live and die without any blemish in character—these and many other social traits got planted in men and women as a result of their exposure to the festival atmoshpere.

Last, but not the least, was the recreational aspect of festivities. They were intended for everybody; but for those whose opportunities for participation and enjoyment in specific recreational activities of an organised type had to be restricted (and their number was very large) found in the festivals sufficient sustenance for their emotions. The festivals served to heal damaged friendship and kinship, and introduced a cult of dignified joy. It was socialised recreation of the highest type.

Citation of Instances : Among the festivals described is the *Katal Teiva Vizh*aa a festival for the sea-God.[3] In a peninsular territory, festivals to sea-god must have been a common feature. But this particular festival was perhaps in celebration of the emergence of a river called Pahruzhi Aaru. The *Paavai - Vizhaa* connected with the *Paavai - nonpu* was a festival for girls who woke up early in the morning everyday in the month of *Thai* (January-February) took their bath in the river and observed a strict code of conduct and at the end of the *nonpu* there was rejoicing and feasting.[4] This *Paavai-nonpu* of the Cankam age later developed more fully and became the *Maarkazhi-nonpu* pictured in Aantaa's *Tirup paavai* and Maanikkavaacagar's *Tiruvempaavai.* Another festival called *Cirucorru vizha*[5], more in the nature of a feeding festival, was celebrated. It was a festival possibly to create an occasion for inter-dining and community eating.

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3. *CLP.* Katalaatu Kaatai
4. *Paripaatal*-11;*Kali* -59; *Narr*-25, 80; *Ainkuru*–84; *Pinkalantai*- -1369
5. *Puram*-33

The *Intira-vizha* which has the more detailed description was perhaps the festival *par excellence* in the Tamil country.[6] It could be organised on a colossal scale because it was in the most prosperous of cities, Kaavirip - poompattinm, the capital of the early Chozhas. The entire population of the city participated in this festival. In addition to these celebration of feasts during the important days like *Citraa-paurnami* also provided activities for social intercourse. Temple festivals had also become matters of routine with the rise of more and more temples. The development of *Pattini-cult* resulted in temples being dedicated to goddess Pattini. The temples in Azhakar-Koil, Madurai and Sri Rangam had by then become well-known, and pilgrimages to these had become a regular socio-religious activity[7]. The temple in Trivandrum referred to as Aatakamaatam in *Cilappatikaaram* had also become very well-known.[8] Kaavirp-poom pattinam and Kaanchipuram were literally cities of eternal temple festivals. The opportunities, therefore, for escaping from the drudgery of life (or the chores of family life) for at least a short while were thus provided by the innumerable festivals instituted in temples.

The Institution of Paanars : The institution of Paanars was unique in its combination of entertainment and education[9]. The Paanars were members of a hereditary community who eked out a livlihood by playing like wandering minstrels, but they were not mere entertainers. As they entertained, they informed, instructed and not infrequently inspired people to purposive action. The name of *Paanan* is sometimes derived from the Tamil term '*Pan*' meaning music. The Paanars had their own residential places as an indication in the *Cilappatikaaram* would lead us to

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6. *CLP. - Intira-vizhavooretutta Kaatai*
7. ibid. Kaatukaan kaatai
8. ibid,
9. *Akam*. 314, 331; Aink-1, 47, 48, 131, There are numerous other isolated references like these. One cannot easily find a parallel to this institution in other parts of the world.

infer.[10] They must have been a compact community developing their professional competence within a domestic pattern of education.

There were different levels and types of Paanars.[11] The Ciru-paanar and the Perumpaanar enjoyed a fairly high status and belonged to the creative type. There were, at the lowest rung, the begging Paanar, who, by the circumstances of their having carried a begging bowl, came to be called Mantai-paanar. Among the Paanars of superior type there were the Icaip-paanar who sang vocally and those that played on the *Yanzh* and had the professional name yaazhp-paanar.[12] The name of a town in Northern Ceylon preserved the memory of this extinct class of wandering teachers whose influence in the pre-Pallavan age was nothing inconsiderable, socially and politically.[13] The Paanars were never nomads.[14] They had settled family lives, but they were away from their homes for some part of the year during which they went in quest of patrons from the nobility and the royalty. They seem to have enjoyed .something like diplomatic immunity and were never suspects in alien lands where they wandered freely. They travelled far and wide, received costly presents and returned home enriched with new experiences.

The Paanars figure in almost every Tamil work, particularly Cankam Literature, but the *Ciru-paanaarrup-patai* and *Perum - Paanrrup-patai*, included in the *Pattup-paottu* collections, are cast in the Paanar mould of poetry by their respective authors, and we are able to form an idea as to how the ancient ministrela promoted social education. The *Perum-paanaarruppatai* describes a Yaazhp-paanar singing the praise

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10. Srininasa Iyengar, PT : *History of the Tamils*.
11. CLP : Intiravilavooretutta Kaathai-1 (35-37)
12. *Puram* – 163, 115, 125
13. These distinctions were only on the basis of the preference of Paanars to be vocalists or instrumentalists. The *Yaazh* was an indigenous Tamil musical instrument, the ancestor of *Veena* (Jaffna or Yaazap-paanam is a town in Ceylon)
14. Vide Ciru-and *Perum paanaarrup-patai* for a descriptiou of their activitities.

of his patron Tontaimaan Ilantiraiyan.[15] As he does so, he brings up various subjects; the land he passes through, the five tracts, the sea port of a place called Neerp-peyyarru[16] (identified by prof M. Ragava Iyengar as Maamallapuram), Tiruvehka,[17] the suburb of Kaanchi, and Kaancipuram itself. There is a lot of extra information spicing the whole narra tion. The *Ciruyppaanaarrup-patai* treats of a group of Paanars and their women listening to a Paanan singing the praise of his patron. He describes the villages and towns on the route to his patron's home. Incidentally he paints wordly pictures of the beauty of the three Tamil capitals, Madurai, Urantai (Uraiyoor) and Vanci.

A class of minstrels going by the name of Porunan is also mentioned in the ancient Tamil Literature.[18] Porunan was also a Paanan though one could not say whether the name was an alternate one to Paanan or signified a distinct Paanan class. The Porunars appeared during festivals or provided entertainment as an integral part of a folk-music festival and after having demonstated their musical skill, went to another place. Porunars were also categorised as those singing about agricultural fields (yerk-kalam), and also battle fields (pork-kalam). The *Porunaraarrup-patai* included in the *Pattup-paattu* collection is a poem cast in the typical *porunar* mould.

The institution of Virali was complementary to that of the Paanar in which qualified women musicians played a very useful social role.[19] The musicians were also agents of social education like the Paanar. They are not to be confused either with concert performers or naatya-performers (dancers). They were qualified in folk-music and folk-dance like the Paanar. Some of them were capable of playing on the *Yaazh* and musical instruments. They seem to have

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15. Tontaimaan Ilantiraiyan was a chieftain ruling from Kaanchipuram
16. *Perumpaan*-1 319
17. ibid : ll (290-291)
18. Tol. Porul. Purat - 36
19. *Akam* 352; *Puram* 32; *Narr* 150, 250, 300, 370,

belonged to a respectable social class from the description of their costly dress and golden ornaments. They evidently collected people in some central place, and while entertaining them, gave them news about current happenings and personalities. This institution like the institution of Paanar was also unique in the Tamil country.

Proverbs as a Cultural Medium : Proverbs were the sugar coated pills of wisdom available to the masses in the past. They, as we know, represent in their essential form some homely truths expressed in a concise and terse manner so as to recommend themselves to a more or less extended circle. They had their place in the formal educational set-up; but as instruments of mass education they were most effective and even the so-called illiterates, by modern definition, handled them with ease in their interaction with others. These were never taught but caught from different social situations. These got internalised as little pieces of wisdom for those who had no schooling and guided them in their life and conduct, Their authorship was as mysterious as that of a *Vedas*, and their conservation was through a cortinuity in their oral transmission from one person to another. These had been *Palzhamozhi* or old sayings, even for the people of ancient times.

The use of proverbs rested on the psychology that knowledge imposed on another, as a demonstration of the intellectual superiority of the person imposing it, is resented, but when presented as a guide-post inherited from the venerable ancestors of the community, it is received with gratiude. This is perhaps why there is the convention among classical authors of acknowledging some unknown authority for ideas obviously of their over creation. 'Enmanaar', 'Enka', 'Enpar', 'Enpar saanror' are some of the conventional methods of concluding the educidation of idea. In Sanskrit, this convention is very prominent in the earliear works

particularly the epics. The authority of Manu is always invoked to lend respectability and to securc acceptance for an idea.[20]

The proverb lore serves as a potent material used by writers of all ages and all types like poets, dramatists, novelists including religious, philosophical and mystic poets, in their works to give a living force, asort of dynamism to their works. There is a separate work called *Pazhamozhi-naanooru* by one Munrurai Araiyanaar in the anthology known as *Patinenkeelk-kanakku* or the Eighteen Minor works. A few proverbs given here are from that work for a taste. 'Nobody pays any price for securing darkness' (4) 'The frog ruins itself by its own voice'(114). 'Like taking away the ladder, after one has reached the top'(136). 'Confide disease before a doctor'(179). 'Even when bearing withess to what you have seen, think well of the impications' (185). 'Understand the way of the world and act accordingly, (188). 'A dog never sniffs the head of a tiger' (204). 'Save wealth for the rainy day' (205).

Story-telling as a Technique : Perhaps no other country in the world could boast of such a well established tradition of story-telling as India. The art of stroy-telling developed independenlly in the Tamil country long before the entry of exotic ideas, but certainly registered phenomenal development after Tamil interaction with Sanskrit literary conventions. Story-telling was a technique of mass education as much as it was a techinque of child education. This technique came in handy in the inculcation of the abstract tenets of religion. Each of the early religions of India built up a stock of stories for being pressed into service of the appropriate occasions. The Tamil people, having accommodated three religions and assimilated them gradually into their

20. Throughout the *Raamaayana* of Vaalmeeki, this name of a legendary authority is invoked to lend weight and suppor tto some idea or other.

cultural pattern, were naturally exposed to the influence of a la.ge number of gripping story-tellers representing each religion.

The Cankam epoch saw the production mostly of abstract ideas. Apart from this, if we are to believe a strong and convincing tradition, Tamil scholars started rendering the Sanskrit epics and *Puraanas* into Tamil. A Tamil *Raamaayanam* and *Mahaabhaaratam* are among the great works of the Cankam age waiting to be discovered by the present generation of scholars as a continuation of the movement initiated by savants like Dr U.V. Swaminatha Iyer but for whom we should not be having many of the Cankam works in their present perfect form[21].

The Tamiliam genius for stroy-telling was not inferior to that of Sanskrit story-tellers. Though of a later date, the *Cilappatikaaram* and its sequel the *Manimekalai* stories fit to be considered part of the best in world literature, are the epics of the Tamil people. Even if one could doubt the historicity of the happenings detailed in both the stories, there can be no underrating of the highest artistry of both. They constitute true popular literature capable of affecting the inner beings of individuals and elevating them to the highest level of spirituality. Verily, they constitute a great movement in themselves.

The stories reduced to writings were intended mainly for scholarly consumption, but there should have been large numbers from the common run capable of enjoying and benefitting by these stories without outside help. Some of the stories that circulated among the masses during this period may be mentioned here. The story of Raama was perhaps most popular[22]. Most of the Cankam works allude to some

21. *Peruntevanaar Bhaaratam* can be proved to have exis:ed from the stray verses avaailable. But the exsitence of a *Raamaayanam* earier than *Kampa-Raamaayanam* in Tamil is a guess warranted by the currency of many of the *Raamaayana* anedotes in the Cankam period.
22. In the *Cilappatikaaram* for instance, there is the most wonderfu compilation of *Raamaayana* story in just two lines. Urkaan Kaatai 146 and 147

of the incidents of *Vaalmeeki Raamaayanam*[23]. Even the *Cilappatikaaram* which was the composition of a Jain monk enshrines many *Raamaayana* incidents.

The *Mahaabhaaratam* story was equally popular among the msses[24]. The story of the Bhaarata battle, the first battle in India in a colossal scale. was chcrished by the Tamil people with a sense of wonder as is evidenced from the references to that battle even in what was intended to be folk-poetry of the Paanar and Porunar.

The stories of ten incarnations of Vishnu, particularly the Tiruvikramaavataara, appealed to the Tamilian taste and imagination[25]. It seems to be true that of all the legends of Vishnu the Tirivikrama legend made its greatest appeal to the people, as is evidenced not only by the copious references to that legend in literature, but also from the utilisation of legend in later day sculpture and painting as worthwhile themes. Therefore those that would even go to the extent of making Bali a Tamil king which is indeed far-fetched. Many of the legends pertaining to Siva and Muruka were also under circulation[26]. The burning of Tiripura is mentioned even in the earliest works[27].

To the majority of the people the appeal to the ear-gate was the most effective. Though writing had been invented, production of the requisite number of copies of books in manuscript form was impossible. Therefore, those who were well-versed,transmitted their knowledge through speech. It was some kind of downward filtration process. Day after day large crowds of people gathered in the Mantapams of temples or in open grounds, after eating their supper, and spent a couple of hours listening to the discourses of scholars.

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23. Akam-70
24. *Kail,* 101, 105 CLP Neerp-patai-Kaatai ll (8-10); Puranceri Irutha Kaatai, l-63
25. *CLP* Aaicciyar Kuravai
26. *Tirumurkaarrup-patal*
27. *Puram*-55

These discourses were in the form of stories. The use of music during the discourses made them more interesting. The popularity of *Raamaayana* and *Mahaabhaarata* should have been the result of the influence of the talented story-teller.

Dance and Drama : Two other media of social enlightment were the dance and the drama. The dance and drama were inseparable in religion. The Tamils had two categories of folk-dance - the *Akam* and the *Puram* - in consonance with the two major aspects of life.[28]. The *Akam*. types of dance were called *Cantik-koottu* and *Vinōtak-koottup* In the former the hero (lover) was the performer. It had four sub-categories. They were *Cokkam*, *Mey*, *Abhinayam* and *Naatkam*. *Cokkam* was pure dance with 108 *mudras*. Perhaps it was *Bharatam* performed by a male. *Meyk-koottu* was possibly a type of dance in which the bodily limbs were involved. In the *Abhinayak-koottu* the meaning of a song was explained by the gesticulations of the hand. The Naatakak-koottu was based on a definite story.[29] Within the *Vinotak-koottu* classification came the *Kuravai*, *Kazhinatam*, *Kutak-koottu*, *Karanam*, *Nokku*, *Torpaavai* and *Varik-koottu*. In the Kuravai type, the subject matter was mostly related to sensual love and victory. For performing this at least seven persons were required. The maximum number was nine. The performers danced together, hand in hand. *Kazhinatam* was the pole-dance in which the dancer performed on the top of a bamboo pole. *Kouttak-koottu* may have corresponded to *karakam* (pot). *Karanam* was pure dance involving rhythmic movements and distinct poses. *Nokku* was possibly a mystic dance with intricate techniques. *Torpaaiva* was the puppet-show in which the puppets that were made to dance were made of leather.

There were also elevan types of dances remniscent of Gods' great acts in His work of protection. The first was

28 *Cip* : Arankerru kaatas
29 sbid

Paantarankam in which there is the representatiou of how Siva danced on the eve of the burning of Tiripura in front of a chariot within the view of four-faced God, with the holy ashes smeared over His body. Six vital elements of the science of dance were involved in this dance performance. The *Kotu-kotti* was as equal to the *Paantarankam*. In this Paarvati dances on the ashes of the *asuras* burnt by the great laughter of Siva. Siva also participates clapping his hands in a mood of victory. This involves four essentials. The *alliyam* type of dance relates to the Krishnaavataara. This is the dance performed by Krishna after breaking the tusks of Kuvalayaapeeta, the huge elephant of Kamsa. In this, there are only a few intricate poses. In the *Kutam* type of dance, Krshna intervenes when Baanasura imprisons Manmata's son Aniruddha for making him the bridegroom of his daughter Usha. This dance was performed with a pot balanced on the head as in Karakam.

Muruka's dance in the centre of the sea when he discovered the treachery of Coora in disguise goes by the name of *tuti.* This involves five essential elements. The 'umbrella dance'. called *Kutaik-koottu,* was performed by Muruka when the *asuras* were depressed having lost their troops. It is performed with the umbrella in a slant position in front of the face and involves four elements.

In the *petu-dance*, Manmata the eunuch, danced for the same of his son, Aniruddha, who was a prisoner of Baana. Four essentials characterise the dance. The *marakkaal* type of dance was porformed by Goddess Durga when the *asuras* fought in the shape of serpents and scorpions. In the paavai-dance, Goddess Lakshi chanted the warring asuras by taking the shape nf *Kottip-paaavai.* Intiraani performed the *katayam-dance* on a field near the Northern gate of Baana's capital city.

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30 ibid ; especially, the commentary for Arankerrukaatai.

Very few societies of the corresponding period could have provided such amazingly large varieties of dances for public entertainment and instruction. It might be seen that those dances carried religion to the common masses in the most agreeable manner.

In addition to these, there were dramas based on religions and social themes[80]. It might appear enigmatic that none of the dramas of the ancient period is available to us today; nor, do we find the name of any drama mentioned in Tamil literature though Naatakam was one of the three branches of Tamil literature of this period. The only possible explanation is that plays for popular dramatization were prepared and memorised; and in those days of high literary standards, no one could have considered it necessary to preserve these dialogues in any permanent form.

22. THE CONCEPT OF ONE INDIA IN ANCIENT TAMIL LITERATURE★

Introduction: This paper is concerncd only with the period of history represented by what is known as the Cankam Literature. Even rcputedly authoritative books in Indian History continue to perpetuate the fallacy that one India is the product of the British contact with India.[1] To those who are not sufficiently acquainted with the Tamil literature, this position may not appear fantastic or historically untrue. A good student of Tamil literature especially the earliest Tamil literature, will easily see that India had been one and indivisible geographically, culturally and, in a sense, politically also, at least two thousand five hundred years ago on a modest chronological estimate based on the unassailable fact that the ideas of the Cankam classics have reference to a period five hundred years anterior to the Christian era.[2]

The Agastya Tradition: Both as legend and as history, the Agastya story presents an undivided India stretching from the Himalayas in the north to Kanyaakumari in the south. The historicity of Agastya cannot be disputed to the extent

★ Paper presented to the 26th International Congress of Orientalists held at New Delhi In January, 1964.

1. For example, Vincent Smith
2. According to Porf V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar the period has been fixed from B. C. 500 to A. D. 400 Vide his foreword to Cilappati-kaaram-Pukaar Kaantam by Thiru. R.R. Shanmugam Chettiar (1946)

of the name being associated with the first work in Tamil, fragments of which are still available in later commentaries.[3] The Agastya tradition in its legendary form may not yield scientific historical facts ; but is helpful in the formulation of a historical generalization. The legend itself is as follows : All the gods from Heaven came to the Himaalayas to attend the wedding of Lord Siva and Paarvati. The weight of the divine population that crowded in the Himalayas tilted up the Tamil country so much that Siva had to ask Agastya to go to the south and restore the balance of the country. Agastya came to the south and his stand on the Potiyil hills in the Tamil country once again brought the southeren part of the country to its former equilibrium. This cosmic game of see-saw in which Agastya balanced on one side in the south against a whole population of gods on the other, was also the starting point of the Tamil language. Of course, the legend is nothing more than the usual way of explaining the geographical features with supernatural incidents for which early literature is famous. However, the generalization that can be made from out of this is, that even when Siva's wedding took place, India was one and the people on the Himaalayas were concerned about the safety of the distant southern regions as evidently as the people of the south were willing to accept the leadership of Agastya, "a Northerner" in the development of the Tamil language. Agastya became the preceptor of Tolkaappiyanaar and eleven others. He lived and died in the Tamil country possibly with the right of the son of the soil, not as a tolerated or bullying foreigner. The Tamil tradition has never shown anything less than the greatest reverence to Agastya, the maker of Tamil.

The National Epics : Tamil Nadu accepted the *Raamaayanam* and the *Mahaabhaaratam* as its own epics ; and evidences to substantiate this are found in the earlist Tamil

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3. Vide Yaapparunkala Virutti.

classics. In fact, there are indications to show that Tamil was the first of all the Indian languages to make translations or adaptations of the epics. There must have been an earlier Tamil *Bhaaratam* than the well-known Villiputtooraar *Bhaaratam*.[4] The guess as to the existence of a Cankam *Raamaayanam* the precursor to the famous *Kamparaamayanam* cannot be fantastic, because there are innumerable references to the different episodes of the Raamaayana story in the Cankam classics. Even in the *Akanaanooru* and the *Puranaanooru* supposed to be anthologies of third Cankam period (first century A.D. ?), there are references to wellknown *Raamaayanam* and *Mahaabhaaratam* anecdotes.[5] That the national epics had become subjects of reverential study by the Tamil people during the Cankam age can be easily inferred from the assumptions of the authors of the Cankam works that the readers of those works had intimate knowledge of the stories of the epic. In *Cilappatikaaram,* the greatest Tamil epic of the period close upon the third Cankam period, Kovalan recounts the sufferings of the Raamaayana heroine, Sita by way of comforting Kannaki similarly subject to the pangs of separation from her beloved.[6] Tiruvalluvar in his *Kural*[7] refers to the Akalya episode while administering a warning against the heinous sin of adultery. Many instances could be given to substantiate the fact that the two epics enjoyed the highest esteem among the masses of the people in the Tamil country.

Buddhism and Jainism in the Tamil Country : Buddhism and Jainism found their way into the Tamil country as a result of a natural process of cultural associa-

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4. *Peruntevanaar Paaratam* : *This is a work in venpa metre written in the age of Pallava King Nantivarman I I I. The verses are interpersed in prose abounding in Sanskrit words. There seems to have been another version, of an earlier age. perhaps also in venpa metre, This is not now available An inscription of 1210 A. D speaks of one Arul nilai Vilakkam to establishing Saivite path by translating Mahaabhaaratam into Tamil (Vide : Ins 482—1905).*
5. *Akam 70; Puram 378; Kali* 52,
6. CLP. 2 : *14 (cf. 46 49)*
7. *Kural—25*

tion, almost as an indigenous development, and not as exotic products. It was in the same manner that Hinduism and the caste system had a coverage over the whole country. The implication is that all these cultural developments had the emotional acceptance *of the entire population of the whole country* and there was no question of any of these being accepted unwillingly in a situation of helplessness as unwanted, emotionally unsatisfying and foreign cultural intrusions. As in the case of Hinduism, which gave common gods to the different parts of the country evidencing complete emotiona oneness, in the case of Buddhism and Jainism features of both the religions that could be identified as common to the whole country in a picture of local variations are many. The con tributions of the Buddhists and the Jains to the development of Tamil literature are nothing if not phenomenal. Unless there had been complete emotional oneness and the spontaneous willingness to accept the doctrines that originated in Northern India on the part of the Tamil people, Jainism and Buddhism would never have been such great social forces as they were in the Tamil country.[8] The melancholy story of the waning of both the religions is common to both South India and North India.

The Rivers Of India: Cankam Literature is replete with references to the great rivers of India like the Ganga and the Yamuna which the Tamil poets pride themselves in calling rivers of their own country. A few instances may suffice to show how these rivers were as much common knowledge among the Tamils two thousand years ago as the Kaviri and Vaikai, rivers of the Tamil country. In the *Perumpanaairuppatai* of Urittiran Kannanaar the Ganga is described as follows : "The Ganga that flows from the abode of the gods of shining crest carrying within its floods precious things from the mountains—the Ganga that is never fordable"[9]. In

8. *Vide* Mayilai Seeni Venaktaswami's *Camanamum Tamizhum and Bauttamum Tamizhum*.
9. *Perumpaan* 11. (*429 433*)

Maturaikkaanci of Maankuti Marutanaar[10] the Gangcs is described as a beautiful river with a thousand branches heading towards the sea. In *Pattinappaalai* of Urittiran-Kannanaar the precious products of the Ganga are mentioned along with those of Kaviri.[11] In *Puranaanooru* the most ancient anthology of panegyric verses in Tamil the perennial Ganga is described as the redeeming feature of a summer that otherwise would be bereft of the sources of water for the clouds to drink from in order to pour back as rain[12].

These few instances are sufficient to establish the truth that the Ganga has been India's national river from time Immemorial and that the Tamil bards transcended local patriotism and parochialism and drew on the natural features of the other parts of India as freely as they drew on the features around them. The other major rivers of India have likewise received attention in ancient Tamil literature.

The Himaalayas: The Himaalayas have come in handy for almost all the ancient Tamil poets for being utilised in figures of speech and in comparisons as well as for direct mention and descriptlon. In *Puranaanooru* alone there are nearly a dozen eontexts in which the Himaalayas figure prominently.[13] In one of them the reference is to the stability and permanencc of the mountains. In another the boundaries of India are described as follows : "In the North the lofty Himaalayas with the snow settled on it, in the South the awe-inspiring Kumari river, in the East the sea dug up by the Sagaras, and in the West ancient ocean that had existed for a long time".[14]

This is perhaps the most remarkable reference to the concept of One India which the ancient Tamils cherished in a situation of unity in diversity. In another verse which is

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10. *Maturaik* 11. (696—97)
11. *Pattinap* 11. (190—91)
12. *Purām*—161.
13. *Puram* : 2, 6, 34, 39, 67, 132, 166, 214, 369.
14. *ibid*. 6

really exquisite in its composition and beauty a swan messenger is told about the Northeren boundary, the Himaalayas In the following manner: "Having feasted on the fish on the great banks of the Kumari, if you are going towards the Himaalayas in the North, do not fail to visit *Uraiyoor*......"[15] Quite a number of verses in this anthology refer to the grandeur of the mountains and the lofty peaks.

In *Patirruppattu*, the boundaries of India are given in unequivocal language. In praising a Tamil chieftain the bard says: "You quelled the valour of the kings between Kanyaakumari in the South and the famous Himaalayas in the North where the Aryans live and the yak sleeps on the hills covered with the Oleander"[16].

It is not possible to cover the whole of ancient Tamil literature in this brief paper in respect of the reverence in which the Himaalayas were held by the Tamils. The general impression gained from the study of all the references is that the Himaalayas constitued the Northern boundary of the large geogaphical and cultural unit of India, that the Himaalayas were thoroughly familiar to the common man as an integral part of India, that the Kumari-Himaalaya combination in delineation of the South-North boundary was naturnl with the the writers of the past and that a good many features of the Himaalayas had been known to the Tamils. In the next section we are discussing attempts made by some Tamil rulers to bring the whole of India under one rule politically.

The Imayavarampars (Himalaya-Fringed Empire Rulers) Of Tamil imperialism. Tamil literature and history contain a large number of aspirants to the coveted title "the emperor with the Himaalayas as their Northern boundary" (Imayavarampar). History would indicate the possibility of at least one or two rulers having realised in part this ambition though conclusive proof is still

15. *ibid*, 67.
16. *Patirrup* 11 (17—25).

to be had of Tamil expansion North-ward to the extent of either the tiger banner of the Chohza or the bow-banner of the Cera having been planted firm on any of the peaks of the Himaalayas. However, the idea or the vision contained in the ambition is suggestive of the concept of one India which the Tamils had in their mind. though very rarely in a political sense. The whole of India was never brought under a single emperor at any time. But the geographical unity and the cultural and emotional identity had never been lost sight of at any time.

Let us now proceed to consider a few of the Imayavaram Pars. Among the Ceras one Netunceralaatan assumed the title of Imayavarampan. *Patiruppattu* contains a number of verses celebrating his military exploits. Here is one eulogy of the king : "You quelled the valour of those who called themselves kings between Kumari on the South and the famous Himaalayas in the North"[17]. In another eulogy Maamulanaar summarises Netunceral's exploits as follows : "Ceralaatan of the powerful drum sailed on the sea cut the katampu, incised the bent bow on the Himaalayas in order to humble those who lived around, and spread on the plains of the fair city of Maantai the famous jewels, the golden idols and heaps of diamonds given to him by those he defeated"[18]. Netunceralaatan's son Katalpirakkottiya Cenkuttuvan also takes credit of having subjugated the territories as far North as the Himaalayas. *Patirrupbattu* has this about him : Kuttuvan of the gold garland whose armies laid waste extensive tracts till the noise of the battles rose around, got the monarchs of kingdoms between Kumari in the South and the Himaalayas in the North under suzerainty"[19]. Another notable Cera is the Cenkuttuvsn of *Cilappatikaaram*. He also claims to have defeated a number of trans-gangetic kings and gone upto the Himaalayas to fetch a stone for making an image of Pattini Kannaki[20].

17. *Patir*-11
18. *Akam* 127.
19. Patir 43.
20. *ÇLP*. 3:25 (126—176) ; 3:26 (181— 4).

The most prominent among the Chozhas with the reputation of having extended his influcnce upto the Himaalayas was Karikaala-Chozha. He is credited with having marched with his army to the Himaalayas where he incised the tiger-sign-manual and returned acknowledging the tributes and subordination of the North-Indian rulers. It was indeed a Napoleonic march. *Cilappatikaaraam* waxes eloquent on this grand campaign of Karikaala[21].

Among the Paantiyas very few have pretentions to the glory of having even extended Northward, let alone conquered the Northern regions bordering on the Himaalayas. However, a Paantiyan named Maaran Vazhuti is said to have caused the kingdoms of Northern India to fade out.[22] But that does not take us far in our present discussion.

The above instances are intended to drive home only one idea, namely, that the Kumari-Himaalaya combination signifying the integrity of Bhaaratavarsha is as old as the very commencement of Tamil literature and any suggestion of a separate Tamil country or Andhra country is as unhistorical as it is dangerously frivolous. Historians may, with justifiable reasons, question the historicity of almost all the North Indian campaigns of Tamil rulers of the classical period on grounds of improbability due to difficult communication, lack of corroborative evidence from North Indian historical sources and the fact that Tamil influence in Northern India was never perceptibly pronounced. But our aim is not to stablish the historicity of the various North Indian exploits of the various Tamil rulers, even though Tamil enthusiasts are not wanting who would accept these exploits as historical, but to emphasize that the Himaalayas were known and acknowledged as the Northern boundary of India and that no ruler in the Southern end on the contrary ever considered the mountains as foreign to him or to his culture, religion or sentiment. The ambition of every great Tamil ruler was to bring the

21. *ibid.* 1:5 (89—110).
22. Srinivasa Iyengar, P.T , *History of the Tamils*. p. 511

entire Bhaatavarsha under 'one umbrella'. It was no doubt nothing more than a sweet dream considering the large expanse of the territory involved, difficulties of communication and transportation and administrative problems of supervision and personal attention,

North Indian Attempts to Hold Sway Over the Tami Country: While the Tamil looked up to the Himaalayas as the height of their ambitions, the North Indians cast their covetous eyes on the fertile and beautiful South that could boast of a more uninterrupted cultural history and philosophy of peace and tranquillity. The South was known even to Megasthanes who in his *Indica* refers to the Paantiyan. The *Vedas* did not ignore the South. The epics are full of references to the Tamil country as an integral part of Bhaaratavarsha. Arjuna took a wife in the Tamil country. A good part of Raama's sojourns was in the Tamil country. Not a small number of the *Raamaayana* anecdotes had their location in the Tamil country. The North Indians were fully conversant with the manners, traditions and customs of the Tamils as the Tamils were familiar with those of the North Indians. For example, the peculiar custom of decorating oneself with flowers which the Tamils had is admired in *Vaalmeeki Raamaayanam*. Likewise, important land-marks, cities and features of the Tamil country were familiar to the people in the North. The phrase "*Yuktham Kavaatam Pandyaanaam*"[23] is a beautiful example of how in the north of India the southern gateway of India had been understood. Kavaatam was the capital of Paantiyas through which the *Vaanaras* passed on their way to Lanka and the name 'Kavaatam' was given, possibly, to signify its being the Southern gateway of India. Tamil literature mentions the city of Kavaatam as the venue of the second Cankam[24].

The theory of a Mauryan invasion of the Tamil country is based on the references to the "Vampa Mauriyars" in Tamil literature[25]; but it has not yet been established beyond

23. *Vaalmeeki Raamaayana—Kishk—Canto 42.*
24. *Irai. kala. Urai. P.6.*
25. *Akam. 69,281*; *Puram*—175.

the shadow of a doubt that there was any prolonged Mauryan occupation oi the Tamil country. But Ashoka's influence certainly reached even beyond the Tamil country into Ceylon and his Edicts distinctly mention the Tamil country. Histori ans do not rule out the possidility of Ashoka having constructed some of his *stupas* in the South, particularly around the Tontaimantalam region.

Religion and the Religious Cults : The *Vadas* were known to the earliest Tamil literature. By the time Tamil literature started its fertile productivity the caste system had become an integral part of Tamil social life. The three castes, the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas and the Vaisyas had become well known groups of Tamil society. The earliest Tamil work extant the *Tolkaappiyam* mentions *Antanar* (Brahmins)e *Aracar* (Kshrtriyas) *Vanikar* (Merchants). The fourth division was not the *Sudra* but the peasant or the *Vēllaala* who was hot the low menial that he was in the North-Indian caste system[26]. The *Vellaala* was as much respected as the Brahmins or Kshatriya. The number of works in early Tamil literature are very few which do not mention the prevalence of the caste system in the Tamil country. The concept of *Varnaasrama* was common to the whole country. The theory of *Karma* which in classical Tamil literature is described as "*Oazh*" became one of the accepted doctrines of Tamil philosophy. Tiruvalluvar, the author of thk *Tamil Vada* (Thirukkural) bases his doctrine of *karma* (*Oazh*)[27].

The *Vedic* religion spread quickly in the South, and while the religion was adapted to suit the region, the *Vedas* were the seripture of the entire population from the Kumari to the Himaalayas. *Puranaanooru* contains references to a large number of *Vedic* doctines and practices evidencing the currency of the *Vedic* religion in the Tamil country. The following instances are interesting : In a verse[28] dedicated to

26. *TLK—Book* 111 *Sutras* (615 *to* 628),
27. *Kural—Chap. 38'*
28. *Puram—2.*

Ceraman Peruncorru Utiyan Ceralaatan, Poet Mutinaakaraa-yar mentons the four *Vedas*, the Brahmanical caste, *aahuthi* and the lighting of the three fires. In another verse[29] in which the Paantiyan Palyaakacaalai Mutukutumip-peruvazhuti is celebrated by Nettimaiyaar, there are referen-ces to *samith* (faggot). fried rice, the perfomance of *yagas*, the construcion of *yaagasaalas* etc. Another poet Moolankizh-ar gives the interesting information[30] that the *Vedic* religion dominated lesser denominations like Buddhism etc. *Pattup-paattu*[31], likewise, refers to the rule of *Vedic* religion in a number of contexts. There are references to practices like the singing of *Vedic* hymns, the *Vedaanta* religion, the *Vedic* language and the *Vedic* gods.

Quite a number of Tamil rulers take credit for perform-ing *Vedic* sacrifices even during times when the practice had gone out of vogue in Nothern India. In may be asserted that while some of the cultural movements had their origin in the North, they were saved only in the South from extinction; and the surprising historical fact is that not a small number of these movements have continued only in the South and are hardly in evidence in the North. The South has always played the role of an agency of conservation in the history of Indian culture. True to this principle, long after sacrifices had disappeared in Northern India, the South maintained the practice, and Tamil rulers took a special delight in perfoming one or the other of the *Vedic* sacrifices. The Chozha ruler Perunarkilli performed the *Raajasooya* sacri-fice, and took upon himself the title "*Raajasooyam Vetta Perunarkilli*," the performer of Raajasooya[32]. Mutukutumip-peruvazhuti, the Paantiga king, had the raputatiod of construc-ting a large number of *yaagasaalas*[33]. Instances like these could be multiplied easily.

29. *ibid*—15.
30. *ibid*—166.
31. *Matura*—11 468—74; 656.
32. *Puram*—16, 125, 367, 377.
33. *ibid*—15

The *Dharma Saastras* also become the possession of the South as much as they were of the North. Manu, the law-giver was a respected authority in the Tamil country. A uniform code of conduct was prevalent throughout the country as evidenced by the identity of the *Kural* ideas with the ideas circulating in the other parts of the country, a fact that sometimes leads one to the wrong assumption that the *Kural* was based on Sanskritic sources. Tiruvalluvar, as a true son of Bhaaratavarszha, naturally presented values current throughout the country as one of the famous law-givers of the whole country. He was the Manu of the South or Manu was the Tiruvalluvar of the North. But both were great sons of Bhaaratavarszha. *Tirukkural* should be considered a national classic presented through the Tamil language by one of the greatest Indian thinkers of all times. Tiruvalluvar was a Tamilian, but he belonged to the whole of the country[84].

The *Aagamas* have been common throughout the country for centuries. Temples dedicated to Vizhnu, Siva, Indra, and Murukan (Lord Subramanya) are referred to in the earliest works. The Subramabya cult somehow became a speciality of Hinduism of the Tamil country, perhaps, long before Vizhnu and Siva gained their dominance over all other gods in the South. All the deities of Hinduism gradually attained importance in the South. Among the deities mentioned in early Tamil literature, special reference may be made to Balaraama, Krishna and Raama. Surpriaingly enough the Balaraama cult (Baladeva) had a vogue next only to that of Lord Subramanya in the Tamil country for a long time. Krizhna has been known to the Tamil country as '*Maayon*' from the very beginning of Tamil tradition. From the Importance of the Krishna cult in the South even outrivalling that in the North, one is sometimes tempted to play with the theory that Krishna might have been a gift of the South to the North.

4. *See* Bharati: *Poems—Centamil Natu*—7.

Some of the common practices of Indians (Hindus) from very early times cannot sustain the theory of many Indias. One of these customs is bathing in the Ganga and other holy rivers. 'Kankai aatutal' or bathing in the holy waters of the Ganga can be traced back to almost the beginning of the Tamil literature. This must have involved a lot of inerac-tion between the people of the the South and of the North. Tamil Inscriptions of the tenth century often end with the warning, "those who destroy this charity shall be guilty of the sin of having killed the sacred cow on the banks of the Ganga". It was a practice with later Tamil rulers to endow lands for those who journeyed to the Ganga for consigning the ashes of the dead in royal families.

The system of marriage, after the absorption of the *Vedic* religion in the South, was, more or less, the same throughout the country. No doubt in this regard it is difficult to assert that there was an exact correspondenee in respect of marriage rites between the South and the North always, but the idea of '*Paanigrahanam*' was common throughout the country.

Funerary customs also did not differ throughout India, two thousand years ago. Both burning and burial had been the accepted customs throughout the country though burial got outmoded by the passage of time except in respect of certain categories of persons like ascetics and *yogis*.

Tamil literature mentions some of the common feasts and festivals of the country. The importance of *Margasires* or *Markazhi* had been recognised, at least, twenty centuries ago in the Tamil country. The festivals of Krishna and Indra were celebrated with equal eclat in the Tamil country. The festival of Cupid or Manmatha was also known to the Tamil people.

Conclusion : In this brief paper it has been possible only to make ageneral approach to the question of the concept of

One India as historical factor of at least two thousand five hundred years. Any student of Tamil literature can state categoricaly that the Tamil maind had always been as one with the Indian mind. It may be asserted, however, with pardonable pri'e that while the Tamil was an Indian, his catholicety of outlook breadth of vision and capacity to accept and absorb good ideas and values, were unmatched. To him "every place was his own; every person was a next of kin"[35].

35. *Puram*—192.

23. STANDARDS OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION★

IT is true that the products of the Universities of recent times, with some honourable exceptions, have not been acquitting themselves as creditably as their compeers three decades ago. A graduate of today cannot be rated as an equal of a graduate of thirty years ago, in thinking, expression, and even public behaviour. The creative ability of the present day graduate in the domain of intellect is practically nil. While the graduate of the past claimed and secured a position of leadership, a graduate of today is one in multitude.

As regards the staff, there is perhaps some truth in the criticism that inferior products of University education also find their way into the colleges to take over teaching posts so that it has been the story of dilution of the quality of teachers by more and more of the present day brand of graduates. As regards the set-up of the colleges while it is true that they too, conform, to the minimum stipulations set up by the University and the Government, not many are keen on building upon the equipment, and show presented at the time of the visit of the University Commission. If one would make a study of the existing colleges, the disparity among them in respect of the physical necessities would be shockingly glaring. Some of the colleges are no better than many of the well-established high schools.

★ Paper presented at the University section fo the 55th Madras State Educational Conference held at Karaikudi-3 in June, 1965

We are not at the moment concerned about the students though at the end of this paper we shall have to do only with the student aspect of the problem. However, to indicate the trend of the thinking adopted in this paper, it may be stated at once that all is well with human eugenics and the atom bomb has not yet polluted the wombs of expectant mothers, and children continue to be good as they come from the hands of God in the language of Rousseau!

The domain of education is just as segment of the total human activity. Its specific trend could no doubt be identified, but it should never be mistaken for an in dependent entity. It is nothing more than a reflection of the universal trend. This latter is the product of history, and possibly a stage in the progress towards an unknown distant cosmic fulfilment. The concept of standard first starts with the way of life that man lives and then only has application to the different human activities like education, work, social relations etc. As standards of life (not in the economic sense, but in the moral and spiritual) have deteriorated by the great damage to the cherished value system, a chain reaction has started in every one of the activities related to life.

One type of reaction to this cataclysmic situation is to cry over it in vain. Calamity-howling can only add to the intensity of the calamity, and not lead to a discovery of an escape solution. Another reaction is to accept the reality and re-build on new foundations. We may call it pragmatism or in any other way, but nations that have been trying to adjust themselves have shown that it is possible to rebuild as new value system on the basis of a philosophy derived from the realities of the contemporary situation. England, for example, has generally accepted the Deweyen pragmaticism and is now evolving its eduational philosophy on the realities of the post-war situation. Every progressive nation is getting wise and re-ordering its educaional systems on the basis of contemporary needs.

The question of over-all standards is beyond the handling of Universites. Sometimes leaders who ought to know better treat University teachers to the peroration that Universities could and must set right general standards by their hanging on to the highest standards and by turning out ideal leaders of society. But it does not require much intellectual effort to understand that when a value system collapses a vicious circle begins to operate and the breaking of it is almost impossible. One must remember that Universities never operate in a vacuum and they are constantly subject to pollution by the other agencies. In fact, the impact of the other agencies is such that the Universities have to let the wings of their theoretical autonomous existence clipped and submit to the humiliating situation of being dictated to by the other agencies. Therefore to blame the Universities for the fall in general standards may be alright if it is just a matter of finding a suitable scapegoat and target for attack, but Universities let it be understood clearly are unwilling abettors in a large conspiracy against values.

But within the picture of the general anarchy in values it is posssble to restore some order and make an attempt to break the vicious circle.

First the problem of quantitative expansion in higher education must be examined and attacked. It is irue that with the incentives provided and consistent with the rapid increase in the population more and more students knock at the doors of colleges evey year. The Indian constitution having guaranteed equality of educattonal opportunity to the citzens, the states do not hesitate to either open by themshlves or encourage the opening of more and more colleges. The number of colleges in Madras State alone today is four times the number in the pre-independence period. Even some villages that had no higher elementary sehools ten years ago have first grade colleges and in all states the trend seems to be in the direction of more and more colleges in villages possibly on the analogy of rural electrification. This trend is the result of the enormous

output by the two thousand odd high schools in the state. The outlets for the products of high school education are very few teacher training, technical training in politechnics, training in indigeneous medicine and lower level secretarial training. The competition in the field of employment is so keen that the possession of a degree is not to meet the requirements of a post, but to stand the competition of those with lower qualification. A graduate stands a better chance of being selected for a lower division clerk's post than an S.S.L.C. or even an Intermediate. Therefore parents desire that their children should become degree holders to survive the competition. More than sixty per cent of the candidates declared eligible at the S.S.L.C. seek admission in the Arts and Science Colleges for no other reason. Of this percentage not even one fourth is fit for college education of the academic type as is evident from the Pre-university Examination results. No doubt pressure of public opinion leads to a dilution of the results rather than in careful selection of students on the basis of their fitness. Over a period of time standards of college education naturally deteriorate in the process of the studies and the evaluation criteria being altered to suit the level of the students. If the problem of standards must be effectively attacked the process of quantitative expansion of collegiate education should be halted immediately. A definite policy in respect of opening of more colleges should be laid down and colleges should not be opened like betel-shops.

But the question what to do with the thousands of high school graduates who would need futher education? The following suggestions have been universally cosidered effective.

(1) There must be a Bureau of counselling in each Panchayat Union or manageable area like Municipality to sort out the high school products into two broad categories of

academically competent and fit for non-academic courses. Parents must take the advice of the Bureau before deciding the future of their children.

(2) Admission to colleges should be on no other criterion than that of proficiency revealed by the marks in S.S.L.C Examination. But even here there is a *catch*. A thirty five per cent minimum is not the hall-mark of proficiency. For purposes of admission to Arts and Science Colleges either the minimum should be increased to fifty per cent or an entrance test should be prescribed before admission to colleges as in many of the states of the U.S.A* This suggestion is nothing new or original and it has been voiced forth by objective leaders time and again, but there is a great psychological hurdle to be cleared before it can be made to have any meaning. Politics sits at the entrance to clear and unbiassed thinking and staves off sanity and true wisdom from gaining entry. This has been the bane of our public life and the misfortune of higher education. Interested groups feel that tightening standards of admission to colleges would result in certain social groups alone securing college education and large numbers of others would have to go to the wall. But it is a fallacy as much as it is politics of a vicious kind. A survey of the S.S.L C. results has shown that brilliant students are found in every social group though the number may not be evenly distributed, but the reason for this unevenness is not lack of intrinsic worth on the part of children of certain groups, but lack of facilities and encouragement. As the states are all-out on a programme of improving the amenities of the high school students the unevenness would disappear in course of time. Therefore the only road-block to standards seem to be the attitude of many of our leaders who refuse to see wisdom in an objective approach to student selection. Politics has made such inroads as to render the presence of the Principals and Professors absolutely useless at

* The Mark scandal in the Public Examination system and the corrupted practices in all possible ways that are in vogue should be a warning and an eye-opener to those in the helm of affairs.

the time of selection. The criteria of selection are not all sound or even educational. The Selection Committees where such committees exist are swayed by petty considerations. Politics must be outlawed from the domain of education particularly politics that is blind, stubborn and of the racketeering type.

Whatever may be the meaning of equality of educational opportunity there can be no democratization of collegiate education. While ticketless passengers in trains possibly with far better destinations than many of paying passengers are hunted down as ineligible to travel, while second rate horses are declared unfit to run races, promiscuity is permitted in college admissions to the extent that the larger number of entrants to colleges consists of misfits.

(3) If college admissions should be drastically restricted to those who are fit, a system of scientific screening of students on the basis of their aptitude and competence should be made. The government must open out a large number of avenues of training to absorb the different talents. This would obviate a lot of wastage of human talent in collegiate education.

(4) In conclusion, a word about the gifted students who on account of poverty and lack of influence are prevented from going to college. It is these students who should be given the first preference in college admissions. Scholarships should be for talent and not for membership in a community.

23. SCIENCE EDUCATION IN THE CANKAM PERIOD★

MOST of the scholars who have examined the question of the date of the Cankam have agreed that the first two centuries of the Christian era must have been the most likely period of the Cankams. Conditions existed at that time for the development of the Academy idea in the Tamil Country. By then, the Tamils had interacted with people from many foreign lands, assimilated worthwhile elements from foreign cultures and were passing through a period of prosperity evidenced by the uninterrupted flow of gold from far off countries in exchange for the Tamil merchandise, sold in those countries over a long period of time[1]. This prosperity was also reflected in the consolidation of the chieftancies into the three kindgom, the Chezha, Chera and Pandya, in the promotion of the arts of peace, in the welcoming of people from Northern India to settle on the Tamil soil, and in the accommodation of three religions all of which were foreign to the Tamil country—Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism[2]. The Tamil Cankams were perhaps the greatest symbol of the Tamil prosperity in the intellectual field.

★ Paper presented to the All-India Oriental Conference, 29th Session, Bhandamkar Oriental research Institute, Pune, May, 1978.

1. Pliny, the historian of Rome, laments the drain of Roman gold into India (South India). This is further corroborated by the presence of Roman coins all over the Tamil country.

2. All the three religions existed side by side. And no other proof is needed than that the earliest Tamil literature got substantially enriched by contribution from leaders of all the three religions.

The Tamil country of that period contained a very highly cultured society with a bewildering number of civilizations. It had a cosmopolitan society with at least three religions co-existing in harmony, a polity not inferior to that evolved in any other progressive region of the world, a trade that had an internatioal coverage and a social life based on well-defined ideals and carried on by small compact communities with the least friction among themselves. The concepts of prosperity and good life had been fully developed; the ides of the division of social responsibility had also been wonderfully worked out. The family set-up left little to be desired.

Naturally, the universe of knowledge implied in these developments was large, and involved a large-scale effort at its conservation and further development. What modern education speaks of as the curriculum is nothing different from the current universe of knowledge. While discussing the nature of subject mattar Dewey has to say: "Organised subject matter represents the ripe fruitage of experience like theirs, experiences involving the same world and powers and needs similar to theirs. It does not represent perfection or infallible wisdom; but it is the best at command to further new experiences which may, in some respects at least, surpass the achievements embodied in existing knowledge and works of art"; and further continues to say: "From the standpoint of the educator, in other words, the various studies represent working sources—available capital"[3]. The Educational system intends to sustain the way of life of the people and the conservation of current values, including the so-called eternal verities, has necessarily to reflect the latest developments in knowledge. That system itself contributes substantially to such a development in the process of its functioning, and helps the improvement of the value-system of the society. The curriculum becomes outmoded each time the value system improves and changes.

3. Dewey : *Democracy in Eduation* p. 214 (The Mcmillan Co, Newyork 1955)

The universe of knowledge developed in the Tamil country during the period under reference may be analysed into aspects relating to the general training of the mind through its assimilation of a body of knowledge, purely abstract in nature, and aspects that had a relevance to the functioning of the large society, both in its practical side of just keeping the irreducible minimum of activities going on, and in regard to what made life spicy and worth living. Not all the areas of education have been considered here. The areas chosen from the complex set-up have a bearing only what we call the secular type of education. The scope of this paper is restricted to (1) Mathematics Education, (2) Astronomy, (3) Architecture and Engineering (4) Medicine, (5) Political Science and Public Administration, (6) Military Science. A liberal education in Tamil in those days was a study of the available literature whose content was adequate intellectual material for a well-rounded personality.

1. Mathematics Education

In its generic sense the term *'kaṉakku'* meant education or knowledge. Thus *'neṭum-kaṉakku'* and *'patineṉ-keelkkaṉakku* have reference to some aspects of knowledge.[4] *'Kaṉakkar'* meant teacher; but either for the reason that mathematics had a very significant role in secular education with its wide application to a number of sciences and arts, or because the Tamils used the designation of the mathematics teacher synonymously with *Aacaan* informally, the term got more meaning that it should have normally conveyed. The science of mathematics must have had notable development in the Tamil country judged from the development of the other sciences that are founded on mathematics and need mathematical application, like architecture, engineering, astronomy and astrology. The arts like music, drawing, painting and sculpture also involve a lot of application of mathematical principles. The two basic items of the curriculum, if we would so put it

4. *'Netum-kanakku'* means the alphabet in general. It also means a big anthology. *Mel-kahakku* refers to major works while *keel-kanakku* refers to minor works.

in modern sophisticated language, were language and mathematics. These two were figuratively the inner eyes of the learned. According to an old proverb, "Eṇṇum ezhuttum kaṇ enat takum"[5]. *Eṇ* referred to numbers; *ezhuttu* referred to the written language though the literal meaning is 'something committed to writing'.

Evidences of the knowledge and application of numbers and fractions are found in every work of early Tamil literature. The concept of mesurement had also developed vastly.[6] The measurement of time and distance and the calculation of the weights of different articles were based on a highly evolved notions of mathematical standards. Geometry also seems to have received considerable attention as a branch of mathematics. The incorporation of geometrical ideas in the realms of art and architecture would imply a geometrical science having developed as an ancillary to mathematics. The so-called Arabic numerals had been anticipated in the Tamil country; and would suspect that those numbers were themselves influenced by Tamil numerals.[7]

Quite a number of Tamil concepts were coined in the fields of mathematics education in addition to the Sanskrit terms incorporated. Even those terms were Tamilised beautifully. Out of the first ten numbers, excepting *'eight'* which has a sound close to the Sanskritic *'ashta'* all the other numbers are in pure Tamil words.

There were treatises on mathematics used as text-books. We have the names of some of them. The *'Eṇ-cuvati'* of today must have been a survival in some from of a text-book in ancient times. The reference to *'kaṇita-nool'* in early literature

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5. Tiruvalluvar also says :
   Eṇṇenpa yenai ezhuttenpa ivviraṇtum
   Kaṇṇenpa vaazhum uyirrkku ... (Kural 392)
6. The science of measurement was called *'alavai'*. Weighing in balance was called *'niruttal alavai'* and measuring liquids was called *'mukattal alavai'*.
7. The Tamil number system must have been evolved long before the Arabic number system. *En* in its primary sense means number. An independent numerical system in Tamil is suggested by the pure Tamil names given to most of the numbers.

may be to an ancient work. The name '*Ennoor*' is also found in references. All this must be enough evidence of the growth of a science which helped considerably the development of a number of areas where its application contributed substantially to civilization and good life.

2. Astronomy

Clear indications of astronomical education are available in the literature of the times. Astronomy is here distinguished from astrology, the science of prediction. The *Puranaanooru* has a plenty of references to astronomical knowledge. The shining objects in the sky were called '*meen*'. The stars were distinguished from the planets[8] *Meen* probably referred to the stars, and the planets were called '*kōl*' corresponding to the Sanskritic '*Graham*'. No doubt there is a mixup because, in the list of nine planets known to the Tamils, the sun and the moon have been included. But apart from this, it is remarkable that the ancients had knowledge of the planetary system. The term '*kōl*' is derived from '*kollutal*' or receiving. The planets *Velli* (Venus) and '*Cevvaay*' (Mars) must have been identified in reference to their colour and lustre, *Velli* synonymous with silvery while *Cevvaay* with red. The *Puram* mentions '*Aruntati*' and '*Vata-meen*'.

The astronomical scientist was known as '*kaniyan*' as astronomy involved a lot of mathematical calculation. *Purapporul-venpaamaa'ai*, a later-day work defines *kani* as a person "who predicts all (astronomical) happenings"[9]. A few teachers of astronomy of the Cankam age could be identified by the *kaniyan* prefix. The chief among them was Kaniyan Poonkunranaar.[10] Another was Kootaloor Kizhaar[11]. He compressed a lot of astronomical information into the stray verse of his available. The fall of meteors presaged evil, and that belief continues even today in India among large sections of the people, though scientifically considered absurd.

8. *Puram*—109, 129, 270 & 397.
9. PVM—verse 174
10. *Puram*—192 : Punkunram is a place in the Ramanathapuram district
11. ibid—229

The Indin Calander had been perfected by this time, and the Tamil country had adapted it, introducing, in many instances, its own concepts coined in Tamil. The twelve months of the year - *Cittirai* to *Pankuni*, the seven days of the week- *Tiṅkal* to *Jñaayiru* the two broad divisions of each day as *Pakal* (day) and *Iravu* (night), the division of each day into 60 *Naaḻikai* (2½ of *naaḻikai* being equal to one hour) all these had become part of the Tamil Caland r 2000 years ago. The twenty seven stars representing one lunar cycle (the Zodaic) - 27.32 days - of the lunar month were identified with separate names taken from Sanskrit, and in some instances, suitably Tamilised.

One other custom in the Tamil country of associating the birth stars of persons with their names may also indicate the spread of astronomical science and its application to the daily life of the people. We have for instance, the names of Aavoor Moolam Kizhaar and Aiyūr Moolam Kizhaar (Aavoor and Aiyoor of the Moolam star).[12]

Some of the ancient works contain astronomical data in respect of major events, for instance, the burning of the city of Madurai by Kaṇṇaki. Scholars would be hesitant to accept these as dependable bases for their calculation of the chronology of historical events. But we are here concerned with the idea, symbolising a method of preserving vital historical events in the memory of the race.

It is perhaps too much to claim that the Tamil country evolved an astronomical science independently. Astronomy is the summation of a host of other sciences, and to claim that Indian astronomy was born in the Tamil country and spread elsewhere without evidences of other related sciences also having developed independently to the extent of creating this new science, is to sacrifice the scientific approach to history at the altar of chauvinistic emotionalism.

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12. Aavoor Moolam Kizhaar composed verses on both *Akam* and *Puram* themes.

3 Architecture and Engineering

Until Kaavirip-poompaṭṭiṇam, Uṛaiyoor and other cities of the ancient Tamils are fully excavated, and the design and architecture of these cities are laid bare, It is not possible to state even in general terms anything about the secular architecture or the town-planning of the period. But from the descriptions contained in various works and from fame which these cities had attained in far off countries, there could be no doubt that the beauty of the architecture and town planniug was the result of the perfect workmanship and the engineering skill of the workers[13]. The *Paṭṭiṇap-paalai* seems to describe a modern city; and in the literature of the world not many descriptions of ancient cities have been so clear or exhaustive as the description of Pukaar. That there were separate enclaves for foreigners must point to the cosmopolitan make-up of the population in the city. A large number of buildings on a colossal scale would seem to be mentioned in the work. The social amenities including recreational facilities provided in the city made it one of the great cities of the then world. Uṛaiyoor also must have shared at least a few features and some of the grandeur of Pukaar.[14]

The architects and engineers who planned these cities, their palaces and dwelling houses must have been experts with a background of sciences of architecture and engineering developed in the Tamil coutry, possibly incorporating ideas from external sources. The Greeks and the Romans had contacts with the Tamil country, and their influence along with the influence of the experts from other parts of India must have been brought to bear upon the development of a science of buliding whose triumphs were clearly visible in the great cities and buildings of those times.

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13. The *Pattinap-paalai* and *Cilappatikaaram* contain descriptions of the layout of the city of Pukaar. its architecture and engineeriag works. Likewise, Madurai is described in *Maturrik-kanci*.
14. Uraiyoor was the alternate capital of Chozhas. It became the only eapital after the submerging of Pukaar in the k*atal*-ko*l* (sea devastation).

The use of timber, particularly teak, iron, copper, gold and silver, had been perfected in the Tamil country much earlier than in many parts of the world. Timber was found in such abundance that after meeting the local requirement fully, it found its way to far-off countries as a profitable ariticle of trade[15]. The expert worker in wood called the *Taccar* (carpenter) was the last word in the wood-work not only associated with the making of the chariots and wooden articles and furniture but also with architecture and construction. The tradition has survived to a small extent today; and one has to look at some of the doorways in temples and large mansion (especially in Chettinad) in the Tamil country to be convinced that the tradition whose last flicker is being seen must have had its days of bedazzling glory. Even today some of the *Taccar* belonging to the ancient families of *Taccar* have their own books of reference in palm leaves.

It is not possible to say if iron was in large use in construction as the versatility of wood was proven in the Tamil country to the extent of certanin constructions being completed without even a small iron nail being used. But the use of iron was very well-known and all the weapons of warfare involved the use of iron on a large scale. The word '*yehhu*' (steel) standing for something approximating to steel must suggest a development in the use of iron culminating in the manufacture and utilization of steel[16]. The armour and the shield were light and effective against the sharpest weapons. The sword whose lustre is often described specially must have been cast in high-quality iron. Therefore, there can be no disputing the knowledge of the use of iron. But the *Taccar* seem to have dominated in great constructions as engineers and architects. Their knowledge of mathematics was thorough. The training was sound and it was had either in the family or from master outside, depending on the

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15. *Cilapatikaaram* refers to the brisk trade between the Tamil country and other lands (Cf, Maturaik-kaantam—urkaan kaathai—pp 107—109)
16. *Akam*—102, 202

circumstances of each *Taccar*. There was a system of appreticeship lasting for as long as 10 to 12 years, either under the father or under the master. All the details of the work were learnt by doing under the instruction and direction of the teacher, whoever it was.

Civil engineering had also attained a high water-mark of perfection. Apart from the construction of cities and towns, quite a number of public works calculated to promote economic prosperity were underaken. One of the first dams in the history of Indian engineering was constructed during this period under the orders of King Karikala[17]. It was a dam across Kaviri, a forerunner of the present-day Mettur construction. It is still there with all the changes and improvements made over centuries—a testimony to the engineering skill found in the Tamil country seventeen or eighteen hundred years ago.

Marine engineering education had alse been developed to the extent of harbours like Pukaar and Tondi achieving international reputation, and what should have proved the seacastles among ships in those days plied between the Tamil coasts and those many thousands of miles away both in the East and the West. Some of the great master-builders of ships flourished in the Tamil country. The harbours were not just places for ships to cast anchor, but constituted huge establishments with sufficient personnel to handle all the problems of maritime operations[18].

4 Medicine

Medical education under a system of *Gurukula* and apprenticeship was undoubtedly a very prominent aspect of the educational set-up during the period, and all the reputation of the later-day physicians should be attributed to their belonging to a great tradition that had commenced many ceturies earlier. The science of *Aayurveda* is no doubt an all-India one

17. The Malepadu plates of Punyakumara EI Vol IX No. 35 pp. 3—5
18. see *Pattinap-paalai* for a detailed aceount of the activity around the harbour in Kavir ip-poompattinam.

in the sense that the ancient *Aayurveda* texts are found all over India in Tamil and Sanskrit. Most of these texts are patently of later-day origin inspite of misleading prefactory verses attributing Siva, Agastya or some other legendary luminary. But the Agastya tradition which has reference to the earliest period of Tamil literature mentions the Agastya of the Cankam fame as the father of Tamil Medicine. *Noy* was the general name given to disease, and *Maruntu* was the name given to medicine; and from this was derived *Maruttuvan*, the person practising medicine[19]. The exponent (or teacher) of medicine was called 'Maruttuva Noolon'.

The existence of texts in medicine is testified to by the references both in the literature and their commentaries as also by the excerpts from such work themselves. Agastya and eighteen cittars are credited with having written depend able texts on medicine, and some scholars even believe that some of them are extant.[20] There is mention of a great treatise called *Vaakatam* by one Vaakataacaryar and the work was so exhaustive and authoritative that the term *Vaakatam* itself began to have the meaning of medicine[21].

Tamil poets with the *Maruttuva* title prefixed to their names were either doctors or members of doctor's families taking to versifying as their hobby. We have names of Maruttuvan Daamodaranaar and Maruttuvan Nallaccutanaar who set some of the *Paripaatal* verses to music.

The medicne that developed in the Tamil country was mostly herbal. Herbal research must have been constantly going on to sustain the system of medicine. The stupendous work of research with all herbs, from trees, plants, grasses, roots and fungus can be understood from the hundreds of names of herbs mentioned in *Aayurvedic* works of later-day.

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19. *Aayurveda* is a common name both in Sanskrit and Tamil for the Indian system of medicine. *Puram*—173
20. None of the *Aayurvedic* texts extant seems to be genuine either in respect of its antiquity or of its authorship.
21. Now the work is extinct.

That we have lost much of that great system today must be acknowledged from our inability to identify most of the herbs. May be, many of these names were professional coinages, and to take them literally and prescribe any *Aayurvedic* medicine is to ask for wanton risk to life[22]

The science of diagnosis also seems to have developed to a noticeable extent. We have the names of many diseases as if from a system of classification. Examples : Pancikkalyappuṇ, Mitarruppacumpuṇ (inflammation of the throat), Pun valalai vayaa noy[23]

The veterinary science had also notable development. There were doctors for treatment of animal diseases. It is to be expected that in a situation in which large numbers of elephants and horses were maintained for the defence of the country, there should have developed a class of expert veterinarians.

The practice of chanting *mantram* in the curing of diseases was not popular during this period, and a disease was a disease and needed nothing less than diagnosis and direct remedy. In later times, with religion dominating life at every turn and in every detail, *mantram* secured respectability with medicine, and sometimes *mantram* was the last resort if medicines failed.

There are indications of knowledge of surgery; but it should be too much to imagine that science of anatomy was so thoroughly mastered as to permit of such precise surgery as it is possible today. But superficial wounds or boils were easy of incision and surgical treatment, with the chances of *sepsis* always there, depending on the degree of cleanliness of the hands of the surgeon and the instruments used.

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22. Teraiyar, a great doctor of the past, is credited with having prepared an exhaustive list of herbs with their medicinal properties. There is no one today who can identify even a few of the herbs.
23. *Puram*—22, 100, 353

Attention was also paid to mental diseases. The mind-body unity was well understood, and the action of the one on the other was known. The way the children were brought up, the way the defeatist mentality and frustration were sought to be removed in those days would be token awareness of mental hygiene to a very appreciable degree.

5. Political Education and Education in Administration

No separate schools existed for training in political life or details of administration. The most leained among the citizens were chosen for the highest posts in the governmental set-up like those of ministers and judges. As regards the other grades of officers, they were trained by their senior in office, or by the father, wherever the office was hereditary. The administrative machinery was not so complicated as to require an elaborate bureaucratic system as in the later Chozha period. The King was practically absolute in his powers and he needed a few advisers in addition to *entourage*.

It is however interesting to be acquainted with the qualifications and qualities of good ministers. These were collected by many of the didactic writers of the past obviously to serve as guide-posts to ministerial incumbents from time to time. Of these writers Tiruvalluvar is the most authoritative, and his exposition of the qualifications and duties of ministers is to be remembered[24]. The specimens of political wisdom mentioned by the learned poet are intended to impress the fact that in the area of politics and administration, a certain body of knowledge had developed in the Tamil country, and it constituted the guide-post to the persons in the governmental positions, particularly at the highest level.

6. Military Training

Though fighting for the country's safety and intergrity was everybody's duty, there was a class of hereditary fighters

24. *Kural*—Chap. 64 (*Amaiciyal*)

whose only occupation was the deferce of the country. The Maravars of the Tamil country were perhaps a unique community of fighters for that distance of time because, the Rajputs and Sikhs, very much associated with the occupation of figting, were a laterday social develpment in Northern India[25]. It is not correct to import any concept of a standing army in its modern sense into the history of the anciant Tamil country. But the concept of the permanency of the army as an indispensable aspect of government had been evolved; and while in times of a major crisis each house countributed fighters in the defence of the country, a minimum number of warriors always stood guard. They played that role as a hereditary class of warriors. They were given tough and thorough training in the use of weapons and also in fighting with hands. There was certainly a scheme of military training. Princes were given systematic military training such as elephant-riding, horse-riding and hardling of the different weapons of warfare. Therefore, military training was based on a philosophy in which wars were never to be occasions for vandalism and immoral and unchivalrous acts (Arattin mantiya marappor ventar).

Descriptions of a battle in Tamil literature wil provide an insight into some of the conventions going with military campaigns. They also suggest that fighting in the Tamil country was not just a matter of some confused engagement taking place on an open ground and one of the fighting kings emerging victorious. It was certainly more scientific than many would have imagined; and systematic training was provided for all those involved in the occupation. The Tamil people used elephants in their wars; and even the elephantry of the North Indian rulers must have consisted of elephants from South India because, the only source of elephants for the North Indian kings was Assam which is really to the extreme East. It should never have been possible to find thousands of elephants from that centre for meeting the military needs of

25. Reference to the valour and chivalry of the Maravars are found in many of the ancient Tamil works eg, *Akam*-35, *Ain*-352.

North Indian empires. Onc would suspect that South India was a more fertile producer of elepeants than Assam, which incidentally, was the autonomous Kaamaroopa for many centuries getting merged into the politics of Northern India later. The hilly tracts of Kerala had the reputation of being the home of mighty elephants.

The point here is that some of the best instructors in the branch of elephantry as a special army division were to be found in the Tamil country. The reference to *Yaanai Nool* or the science of elephants suggests a highly developed system of training in the strategy of elephantry[26]. There were colonies and families of elephant-tamers, and also instructors in the strategies of elephantry division.

The use of horse in the battle was equally prevalent, and the training of cavalries was also an integral aspect of military training. Horses were either used for riding or for the drawing of chariots.

The training in the art of fighting provided to the Maravars as hereditary education. Marava warriors occupied positions as Commanders and instructors. The military establishment of each kingdom was as important as the civil establishment, and each kingdom had its own armoury. There were centres of manufacture of arms in which trained smiths and carpenters and sometimes builders and even stone-workers were employed. We are unable to assert that there were special military schools with any appoximation to a modern military school in respect of organisation and training. But the elaborate set-up of the military administration even during the Cankam age deepens the impression that Maravars took a leading part in the training of warriors and sound traditions had developed in this as in the other areas of administration.

26. Dr. UV Swaminatha Iyer refers to this work in his '*Cankattamilum Pirakalattamilum*.

25. THE COMMUNITY THAT HAS CONSERVED THE DRAVIDIAN CULTURE★

If, on a careful study, one is able to identify both the distinct aspects of Dravidian culture and a scheme of uninterrupted continuity characterizing it in South India, the phenomenon must undoubtedly be attributed to the pious efforts of one compact community that has reconciled most splendidly economic prosperity and spiritul pursuit. The Naattukkottai Chettiars of Ramanathapuram District in the TamilNadu different from the Chettiars or shettis living in the other parts of the Tamil Nadu, Andhra and Mysore. They are distinguished by the local title 'Nagarthaar' whose derivation itfelf is a matter of academic discussion. In the sociology of India, the compact Nagarathaar community localised in one area, pursuing the same occupation, and subject to the same customs enforced by the community's elders is a unique phenomenon. Of course, it is not to deny that, of late, the Nagarathaars,too,have started migrating to other districts; and because of the political and economic developments in Malaya, Burma and Ceylon, many of them are forced to compete for jobs along with other communities giving up their traditional business of banking. But this process of changing over due to the stress of politics and other factors is slow, and

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the Nagarathaars are still an identifiably separate group, conservative in outlook, deeply religious and pursuing age-long traditions and customs.

Tradition has it that the Nagarathaars migrated from Kavirippoompattinam many centuries ago; and their name is sometimes derived from Kavirippoompattinam, the Nagaram (city) *par excellence* of those days. Their choice of the Northern part of the Ramanathapuram coast as the final place of settlement seems to have been actuated by the desire to live in peace and freedom as the exodus from Kavirippoompattinam itself was the result of persecution. The community made itself self-sufficient by securing for itself the esseniials, both material and religious, of community life, within the new place of settlement. They colonized ninety-six villages and most of them are still easy to identify. They set up nine centres of worship, one in each of the following places:

Ilayathankudi, Maathur, Vairavankoil, Pillaiyarpatti, Nemam, Iluppaikkudi, Cooraikkudi, Velangudi and Iraniyoor.

The deities worshiped in these temples are the manifestations of Siva. In the denominational organisation of the community, the Nagarathaars have assigned themselves to one or the other of the nine temples, and this attachment to a particular temple is equated with a *gotram* for purposes of marriage alliances and marriages within the same temple denomination are taboo.

From almost the dawn of civilized history, the Nagarathaars have been an enterprising race of merchants bringing welath into the country from far-off lands with which they had trade contacts. It would seem that for many centuries they commanded the foreign trade of Sou h India. The existence of Tamil merchant communities in Malaya and Burma even so early as the Chozha period, evidenced by inscriptions in both these lands, would tempt one into the guess that the enterprising community that promoted India's international trade

of those days was none other than the Nagarathaars. If the guess were anything more substantial, it would help us to see a continuity in the Nagarathaar connection with Burma and Malaya at least for a thousand years.

The Nagarathaars are the richest community in the Tamil country. They have been the traditional banking community of the South for many centuries. In a study of the indigenous banking ststems of India, the contribution of the Nagarathaar community to the concept of banking, both in its theory and practice, is bound to reveal itself as the most outstanding.

Philanthropy and a deep religious sentiment are the most outstanding traits of the community. Its prosperity has never been looked at with jealousy by the less favourad communities because it used it in the preservation of the Hindu Religion and its institutions. Kings and emperors built the vast temples of the South in the past, and it is no unmerited praise that the Nagarathaars kept the temples going. It is no exaggeration that there is not a single temple in the Tamil country that has not received the benefaction of the community for some purpose or other - renovation, repairs, setting up of worship or additions to existing structures. On a very conservative estimate, their contribution to religion and education would easily exceed twelve crores of rupees.

Their charities were not confined to South India alone. They have given more than a million rupees to the temple in Benares. Their charities in Burma, Malaya and Ceylon are too numerous to mention.

The Nagarathaars have undoubtedly preserved the pristine purity of the Dravidian culture. The tall gopurams, the excellent works of sculpture, the huge hundred-pillar and thousand-pillar mantapams, the golden vimanams and many other characteristically Dravidian symbols of culture would have gone the way of many of the North Indian shrines that fell a prey to foreign vandals,if the Nagarathaars had not kept constant vigil over our cultural treasures and hastened to set

right any damage either through vandalism or through the operation of Time.

Of late the community has turned its attention to the field of education. The Annamalai University, the only residential University of South India, owes its orgin to the foresighted, far-sighted and clear-sighted vision of Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiar, the prince among the philanthropists of the Nagarathaar community. Dr. Rm. Alagappa Chettiar has earned an undying name by his charities in the field of education totalling over a crore of rupees. Sri Karumuthu Thiagarajan Chettiar may very soon take the credit of reviving the glory of the Mathurai of Cankam times by his active interest in the sponsoring of the Pandiyan University for which he has already set up the basic institutions in Mathurai.*

The Nagarathars have taken an active interest in the conservation of the old Tamil works. But for their zeal many of the Tamil classics would have disappeared. They published books just for the love of it, and distributed them *gratis*. Even today they have the custom of releasing good books on important occasions like marriage etc. and distributing them free to the guests.

Because of their interest in South Indian culture and religion, many of the traditional craftsman and the artisans have been saved from total extinction. Many of the old type *sthapathis*, stone-dressers, sculptors, painters, and mesons are still available even though their numbers have dwindled because of lack of patronge. The Badrachalam Shrine Renovation Project which will cost over fifty lakhs of rupees is being carried through with the artisans and masons of Chetti nad.

India, generally, and Tamilnad in particular, owes not a little to this community of godly people who in their service to god and men have avoided the lime-light and publicity and shown the way to reconcile *Artha* and *Dharma* - material prosperity and spiritual duty.

★ It was my expectation then (1962). when I wrote this paper. Now Maduri-Kamaraj University had come up.

26. HIGHLIGHTS OF TAMIL CULTURAL INFLUENCE ABROAD IN THE CLASSICAL PERIOD★

THE scope of this paper is restricted to the early classical period.[1] It is true that the interaction between the Tamils and the peoples in the other parts of the world has been a continuous process frcm the earliest historical times, but the impact of Tamil culture was profound and in certain aspects permanent only in the earlier stages of the interaction. To a certain extent, the Tamil cultural operation in the earlier stages was in virgin field over a large area. It was a way of that carried with it spectacular novelty and appeared incredibly far in advance of the semi-primtive developments in many parts of the world. Naturally the Tamil culture had very little of opposition from a rival culture equal to itself. It was accepted, as a blessing and a boon. The Tamil culture as it was accepted by the new peoples outside left a permanen imprint on the native cultures which it subordinated and overwhelmed so that the vissicitudes of time could not wipe out the Tamil element in the cultures which underwent redical changes.[2] The Tamil culture also filled in a cultural vacuum in some of the areas which it affected.

★ Paper presented to the All-India Oriental Conference,(22nd Session) Gauhati, Assam (1965).

1. Caṅkam and Pre-Caṅkam period.

2. Evidences are found in the excavations and relics in Sumatra, Ja a Malaya and Indo—China.

In the post imperial Paaṇṭiyan period the Tamils had very little of their indigenous culture to share with the world. That culture itself had changed beyond all recognition and whatever influence the Tamils exerted over peoples outside India cannot be considered purely Tamil. For instance, after the British established their political influence and supremacy in India, a large number of the Tamils were shipped to far off countries like the West Indies, the Fiji Islands, etc., where their descendents are still to be found either with pure Tamil names or at least with a clear memory of their Tamil orgin. They are Tamils, no doubt, but only in the geographical sense of their having migrated from the Tamil country. They were more correctly, organisd, possibly anglicized Tamils having very little to share with the classical Tamils, and much less with the unorganised pure Dravidians. Hence our restriction of the scope.

The earliest Tamil works extant reveal themselves as products of a mind far above parochialism and geographical narrowness of any kind.[3] The themes were local; the setting was of the immediate environment. But the authors freely traversed the entire known world mentally for securing flesh and blood to clothe their intellectual products. Whether

3. The *Tirukkural*, for instance is a work for the entire humanity. It presents the norms and the value system developed in the Tamil country for the benefit of mankind. The following passages conveying the broad outlook of the Tamils are worth considering:

Yātānum Naṭāmāi urāmāl ennoruvan,
Cāntunaiyum kallāta vāṟu —*Kural* 317
Paṇpuṭaiyār pattuṇṭu ulakam ahtinrēl,
Maṇpukku mayvatu evan —*Kural* 996
Neerinramaiyā yākkaik kellām,
Uṇṭi kotuttōr uyirkout tōrē —*Puram* 18
Nilāmpuṭai peyarva taynum oruvan,
Seigti koṅkōrk kuiti yilena
Aram paatinre —*Puram* 34
Īyena irattal izhntan ratanetir,
Īyēn enral ataninum izhnitanṟu
Kollenak koṭuttal uyarntanṟu atanetir,
Kollen enṟal ataninum uyartanṟu —*Puram* 204
Nallatu ceytal aarraa raayinum,
Allatu ceytal ōmpumin —*Puram* 195
Vinaiye ṉtavark kuyṟe —*Kurun* 135

they could be credited with any historical conciousness or not as we understand it at present, they did not fail to refer to the entire universe of their experience, both direct and vicarious. The geographical knowledge, particularly that bearing on the location of places both local and foreign, which can be gleaned from the literature of the past is nothing if not stupendous. We understand from them that right from the dawn of the literary period the Tamils had the knowledge of and contact with the entire world as it was then understood, possibly excluding the America and the Arctic and the Antartic regions. Some of the countries whose names are easily identifiable in the earliest literature are China, the Malaya, Archipelago, Ceylon and the countries of Central and Western Asia and Europe.[4] Some specific names like China, Ilam or Ceylon are found in their true form. But many others are grouped by general names like *Yavaras*[5], or Anniyar or *Maruvooraar*[6] for whom the city of Kaaviri-p-poompattinam contained a separate colony with the name Maruvoor-p-paakkam or the foreigners' enclave distinct from Pattina-p-paakkam or the area of the local citizens. It may be noted that contacts with foreign countries on an all-India scale had begun many centuries before the Christian era as is evident from both literature and epigraphs. The edicts of Asshka[7] leave us in no doubt as to the possibility of the Emperor sending out emissaries of his new *dharma* to quite a number of foreign countries. But it is not safe to assert that it was Northern India that gave the lead in

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4. The references to China are copious in Sanskrit (e.g.) the *Mahaabhaarata* (Sabhaaparvam—51-1843). See also Scoff's *Periplus* page 246 in which Chinese contact with Malacca with which Ind a was closely connected is mentioned. The betel leaf is conisdered an exotic produet, bought from Malaya. The trade with China was in silk (called Ceenam and sugar (ceeni ca ukkaral).

5. Cf *Perumpaan* line 316; *Mullaip*-line 61; *Netuna* - line 101; *Puram*-56 (line-18).

6. CLP Indira Vizhavur Etutta Kaatai-5.

7. See the *Edicts of Asoka*: (Vide: *Inscription of Asoka* by Bhandarkar and Majumdar - Calcutta).

the process of establishing foreign contacts. The movement was characteristic of the whole of India and a shrewed guess as to South India having done the pioneering work in this regard may not be wholly without basis. No doubt sea connection with foreign countries was brisk only after the discovery of the Hippalus.[8] But even long before, that Peninsular India appears to have set up commercial contacts with the outside world and detailed reference to this is found elsewhere in this paper. The discovery of the Hippalus was a god-sent to the Westerners who were eager for closer associations with India as the inflow of foreigners to India was very slow before the discovery. At that period it was the daring sea men of Tamil Nadu that went far into the sea in search of markets for their articles of trade. It was from these that the foreign merchants learnt about India and developed a keen interest in coming to India.

The term *Yavana*[9] has been the subject matter of a lot of research literature. The term occurs both in Sanskrit and Tamil works of the pre-Christian era. The most commonly accepted meaning of the term is a native of Greece the closest equivalent being *Ionian*. That Greece and India had known each other intimately is no new knowledge. Possibly before Alexandes invasion of Northern India, the Greeks had known about Southern India and their desire to conquer the land must have been inducsd by the prosperity and the standard of living of the people of the South.

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8. Hippalus is credited with having made the discovery of the monsoon wind blowing regularly across the Indian Ocean in 45 A.A It was calculated that with the help of these winds a ship leaving Okelis, a port at the mouth of the Red Sea would reach Musiri (Cranganore?) or any other Tamil port of those days in less than forty days.

9. See page 101 of the *History and Culture of Indian People* - Vol: *The Age of Imperial Unity*. The author has this to say about '*Yavana*'. It was used as a synonym for 'Mlecha' in later literature. But in the earlier centuries of Christian era it meant the Greeks only. The word was derived from the old Persian from "'Yavana' meaning 'Ionion Greeks'. Of course Yavana in India referred to all the Greeks

Megasthanes had known the Paantiyan country. According to his statement the daughter of Hercules by name Paantiya ruled over the South of India and gave the country her name. No doubt this is historically absurd because Hercules is a legendary name, but the reference to the Paantiyan is significant.[10]

The Periplus of Erythrean Sea and Ptolemy's *Geography* are more communicative about the Tamil country than the other parts of India.[11] Pliny has also a lot to remark about the draining of Roman gold into the Tamil country in exchange for luxuries bought from the country.[12] In fact, one of the not insignificant causes for the impoverishment of Rome was the export of the large quantities of gold to the Tamil country for buying commodites that pleased individual fancy and hardly added to the permanent national wealth.

That the Tamils were the pioneers of India's foreign trade in ancient times is never disputed. Even as early as the seventh century B.C. with the emergence of Babylon as the emporium of Asian trade the Tamils set up their own colony in Babylon which had an uninterrupted reputation for thirteen centuries.[13] The Tamils had plenty of opportunities to

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10. See : '*Foreign Notice of South India* Neelakantha Sastri K.A.
11. The *Periplus* refers to Damirica or the land of the Tamils. The author of the work refers to Musiri and Tonti (Muziris and Muziris according to the *Periplus* abounded in ships with cargoes from Arabia and Greece. It is surmised that the author of the *Periplus* was an Egyptian Greek. He made a voyage to India possibly about 60 or 65 A.D. He has listed the places he visited and the articles of trade in each place The first harbour he visited was Broach at the mouth of the Narmada. Among the other plaees were Kalyan on the Bombay coast and ports on the Malabar coast which in those days was Tamil. He rounded the Cape Comorin and visited the harbours of the East Coast. It is possible to identify many of the ancient names with the parallels of today
    Ptolemy was . geographer from Alexandria (150 A.D) He refers to Khaberis or Kaavirip - poom-pattinam, and Nikamat identifiable with Naakapattinam. Cunningham says "Chozha is noticed by Ptolemy. His *Orthura regia Sor athi* can be identified Uraiyoor, the capital of Soranatha or Chozh Natu."(vide: *Ancient Geography*, p. 631) Ptolemy also mentions Arkadu about which there is a lot of discussion.
12. Pliny would estimate the quantity of gold coming into India at fifty million sesterces (half a million sterling pounds) each year to pay for the balance of trade.
13. See P.T. Srinivasa Iyengar's *The History of the Tamils*, pp. 62—10

interact with the Chinese, Phoenicians. Jews and people from Europe in Babylonia. Even after the destruction of the Babylonian empire by Cyrus the South Indian Association did not grow any the less in Babylonia. Darius the Great took keen interest in the promotion of trade on a global scale and it is even suggested that he reopened and widened the Suez Canal. His direct rule over a part of the North-Western India increased his interests in the Indian trade and the use of silk made in India was first propagated during his reign in the Western countries.

The Greeks and the Romans dominated South among the foreigners in India's international trade after the Persians. In a sense the Tamil country was drawn into closer commercial and cultural relations with Europe through Greece. In the works of Sophocles, Aristophanes and others large number of Tamil names are used for commodities possibly for the reason that there were no Greek equivalants. Examples worth noting are: *Oryza* for *arisi* (rice), *Ziggiberos* for *injiver* (ginger). *peperi* for *pippali* (long pepper), etc. During this period ending with the first century B.C. the Greeks were in intimate commercial and cultural relations with the Tamil country. The term *Yavana* used in Tamil literature may have reference to the Greeks that were found in the streets of the Tamil cities buying and selling. One cannot be certain if the idea of anthology was the gift of Greece to the Tamil country for the other way about. However, this much has to be conceded that the largest number of anthologies most perfectly organized and systematised are to be found in early Tamil literature. In fact, anthologies account for a good proportion of classical Tamil literature and the antho logy tradition has persisted to this day. In the field of religious literature which was a distinct characteristic of the Pallava and the later Chozha periods, the anthology idea was helpful in the codification of the writings of different religious leaders into *Divya Prabandham* and *Thirumurais.*

Another important aspect of the give and take between Greece and the Tamil country has to be identified among the

cities dcminating the administration both in the Tamil country and the Greece. Kaavirippoom-pattinam was possibly a city state as was also Uraiyoor. It is safe not to imagine wide territoial jurisdiction for any early kingdom of the Tamil country beyond a short disance of the capital. We do not know if the Chola kingdom set up in Kaavirip-poom-pattinam had jurisdiction over a vast area. It may be true that over the vast area going by the traditional name of Chozha country there was no other rival kingdom as powerful as the one in Kaavirp-poom-pattinam or Pukaar. But thatthere were hundreds of petty principalities each of the size of a village connot be easily disputed. There were, in fact,a large number village states under the shadow of a big kingdom which itself was nothing bigger than the city state.

Next to the Greeks the Romans evinced keen interest in commercial and cultural contacts with the Tamil country. Out of the eighty places in which Roman coins have been discovered in India dated between the first century B.C. and the fourth century A.D. at least thirty-five are to be found in South India, and out of this number more than half in the Tamil country.[14] Coins of emperors like Augustus and Claudius have been discovered in many places in Tamil Nadu. These leave no doubt as to the close contact between Rome and the Tamil country,not only commercial but also cultural. The Romans were fond of display and many of the animals that were employed during great events on the circus had been taken from India. Sometimes the guess is hazarded that South Indian trainers went with the animals to train them.

South Indians were great hunters and Indian hounds were employed in foreign countries in hunting. The Greeks, the

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14. In South India alone we have 612 Roman gold coins and 1200s silver coins. The following account in respect of the trade with the Tamil country is furnished by Sewell (*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*), 1904, p. 591): Under the early Roman emperors there was a great demand for pepper, spices fine muslins, perfumes, pearls and precious stones. The preservation of a large number of coins in Madurai might point to a colony of Romans in Madurai.

Romans and the Persians were literally fond of the Tamil hound whose strength and ferocity has been sung in *Puraraanooru, Perumpaanaarruppatai* and other works.[15] The 'Kata Naay' of the Tamil country was the chief factor in the hunting expeditions of the Persians and Greeks.

Even the insects of the Tamil country had their use in Greece and Rome. The Cobra and Python were really articles of export. One wonders for what purpose these poisonous reptiles were required in foreign lands. Strabo claims to have seen in Egypt an Indian serpent nine feet long. It is significant that at that time the Tamil country was in active commercial relations with Egypt.

Perhaps the most significant single commodity of the Tamil country that affected the way of life of the people in Greece and Rome was the pearl of the gulf of Mannar. There is the funny story of Aesopus who took a costly Indian pearl from the ear of Metella and swallowed it because he wanted to have the satisfaction of eating the costliest thing and the pearl was worth eight thousand pounds. Cleopatra never failed to dissolve costly pearls in her wine.

One significant result of the trade during the centuries preceding the Christian era was the spread of a large number of ideas leading to remarkable changes in the way of life of people in foreign lands. We are aware of many Tamil colonies being set up in most of the countries with which Tamil Nadu had commercial intercourse. Even women appear to have followed their men to far off lands. We are informed that in the entourage of Ptolemy Philadelphus there were a large number of Indian women. We have already alluded to the South Indian colony in Babylon. Perhaps somewhat more interesting than all these details is the information that in Armenia with which the Tamil country had active trade contacts some of the religious cults of Tamil Nadu were established. We have it on very high authority that the Krishna and Baladeva cults spread into Armenia.

15. *Puram*—71; *Perumpān - line* 126; *Akan* - 109 (*line* 11.)

There is ground for the belief that these two Indian cults went from the Tamil country rather than from Northern India though Krishna and Balaraama were North Indian gods. Only in the Tamil country were developed as Krishna and Baladeva as separate cults while in the North they constituted two aspects of the same cult.[16] Krishna was the '*Maayon*' of the Mullai (pastoral) region and Baladeva was the 'Vellaiyon' or of white god with the plough, of the *Marutam* region where agriculture possibly originated. The black and white gods of the Tamil country though borrowed from North Indian hagiology were shaped as two distinct cults only in the Tamil country and their migration to Armenia was from the Tamil country and no where else. So famous were the cults intheir foreign habitat that St. Gregory was afraid that they might damage the cause of Christianity. In the fourth century A.D there was actually some kind of a minor crusade led by the Christians against the Pagans. In the fight the priests were killed, the temples were destroyed and the colonists were converted to Christianity.[17]

For the sake of brevity detailed references to the various movements of the Tamil country that affected the other parts of the world until the twelfh century have not been given in this paper. Many of the literary conventions of the Tamils appear to have affected those in distant lands. The *Cittira Ezhuttu* of the Tamils had become a memory in the Tamil country long before they were the style and vogue in the middle East and China. The art of ship-building which the Tamils developed must have been far in advance of its counterpart elsewhere considering the fact that Tamil foreign trade was active even in the pre-Hippalus epoch. The animism of the Tamils must certainly have had its impact on the cults and beliefs of foreigners who interacted with the Tamils. The Tamils were the earliest to develop notions of regional geography which must have found their way to the then civilized corners of the world. Foreigners' dietic habits too must have been influe-

16. For a discussion of this see : P. T. Srinivasa Iyenaar's *The History of the Tamils*, pp. 202-205.
17. Vide: *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1904 - pp. 309-314.

nced considerably by the popularity of rice as staple food meterial in far off countries. Sartorial graces and refinements went from out of the Tamil country to Greece and Rome and while many of the old time formals have survved in their shadow from at least in the Tamil country, they have been substituted by the sophisticated later styles elsewhere. But a study of dependable paintings and sculptures depicting old Roman or Greek life would leave us in no doubt as to the indebtedness of the foreigners in respect of the wearing of apparel. This point need not be laboured further because cotton and silk originated in India and the Tamils had the reputation of making the best use of the materials.

In conclusion, it may be stated that the contribution of the Tamils to the concept of cultural internationalism was considerable and the foundations well and truly laid by them led to more extensive contacts during the Pallava, and later Chozha periods. The theme of how the Tamil country had been the intermediary of North Indian culture also deserves comprehensive investigation.

27. TIRUVALLUVAR'S PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION★

TIRUVALLUVAR is one of the greatest educators of the world. His magnum opus, Tirukkural, is the best product of the Tamil genius. This work breaks new ground in aphoristic literature and is comparable to *sutras* in terseness, profundity of meaning and applicabillity to the life of the common householder. Its uniqueness gets enriched by its high literary value also.

Essentially an Idealist : Tiruvalluvar may be regarded as an idealist in the sense that he believed that the true or the real is essentially spiritual and mental in nature. We connot put any brand to his idealism; once we do so, we are treading on rather a slippery ground. But we may generally say that he belonged to the school which affirmed that reason and consciousness constituted the essence and complete nature of reality. When Tiruvalluvar seems to convey the impression that he believed in the universality of truth, we are reminded of the Socratic type of idealism. The method of mutual admission which Socrates spoke about is nothing but comparison of notes in one's search for truth.[1] The couplet under reference almost looks like tableted Socratic wisdom because, Socrates was among the first philosophers who pro-

★ Paper presented to the Symposium on *Tirukkural*, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati - 1974.

1. Kural—423.

pagated the concept of universals in arriving at which the best method is the Method of mutual admission or examination of veiw-points with the view to accepting them or rejecting them. From out of this process of search for what is eternal is evolved every one of the universals. Like Socrates, Tiruvalluvar believed in the universality of truth.[2] Like Socrates also, Tiuvalluvar chose man as the starting point of his investigation[3]. He had no use for mere physical speculation. When Sccrates chose man as the focal point of enquiry, idealism was born. Tiruvalluvar impresses one with his quest after what makes for an ideal individual life.

If Tiruvalluvar may be labelled the idealist par excellence it is because of his belief that humanity is the chief concern of education. Man, with his powers of thought, occupies a unique place in the scheme of creation and the grandeur and worth of human life must never be lost sight of. The main task of education, according to Tiruvalluvar, is the realization of the perfect patteren in each individual's life[4]. Education must enable one to become one's true self. Self-realization is the aim of life and the goal of education, according to Tiruvalluvar. Man's higher or spiritual nature is essentially social; and the social is an expression of man's rational or spiritual, hence universal, nature. The individual can realize his full potentiality only as a member of human family, participating in, and enhancing, the cultural values which are the common possession of all mankind. In affirming the real existence of spiritual values their eternal nature and their universality Tiruvalluver's idealism enriches the social concept of education that has the greatest validity today.

The goal of education is the achievement of the good by adherence to spiritual values. The end of life is to acquire an inner relation with the Infinite, The function of education is to help in the search for the ultimate universal

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2. The decad on 'Possession of wisdom' (43) enforces this.
3. The Tirukkural is verily the result of a prompting for the concern of men.
4. See decads on *kalvi* and related themes in the *Kural*.

values so that the truth of the universe may become our truth and give power to our lives. The development and experience of spiritual life unite individvals inwardly. The destinies of individuals receive their peculiar nature from such a common life. Developed personality or the realized self, which Tiruvalluvar emphasizes is not a small number of chapters, is a principle not of separation but unity and cohesion. Thiruvalluvar was not to tally unconcerned with religion as an idealist, though it had no special label. To him religion is fellowship with the Unseen. In common understanding, it is the reaching out of the soul to a Supreme Power (call it God, if you like). The attitudes of religion are awe, reverence and worship. Morality has a social connotation and it may exist independently of religion. But as morality and religion progress to higher forms they meet and become complementary to each other. If religion preaches love of God, morality preaches love of man. **But the guiding principle is love.** The love of God presupposes love of man or vice versa.[5] To sum up, the ultimate purpose of education, according to Tiruvalluvar, is self-realization through moral and intellectual development.

Certain Concepts germane to the above generalizations. Tiruvalluvar's idealism is necessarily prescriptive in the main, and emphasizes eternal verities. The '*Katavul Vaazhth*uhu' is only the title of the first chapter; but in none of the cauplets is there specific mention of the concept '*Katavul.*' Here we may see the Form of the Good spelt out in ten couplets. This concept occurs in many more situations both directly and impliedly[6]. The concept of self-realization is also enforced frequently in many chapters.[7]

The ethical purposes of education dominate the entire work. The ethical concepts brought up have a reference to

5. '*anpu*', is another concept that has received special attention in the *Kural*.
6. For example, the other decads in *Paayiram*.
7. Of the particular value to the concept of self-realization are the sections in *arathup-paal*.

the individual as a member of society[8]. It will be worth the while of scholars to pick out the ethical concepts in these chapters and present them in their most comprchensive connotation.

Education according to Tiruvalluvar: According to Tiruvalluvar education is the attainment of mental and moral perfection through knowledge and association with perect man. Tiruvalluvar would decry knowledge which serves no other purpose than as ballast for the mind. True knowledge according[9] to him must lead to wisdom, and the attainment of wisdom is the resultant of knowledge. The statements contained in the couplets on '*arivutaimai*' are significant as defining wisdom[10].' According to the saint, wisdom consists in keeping an open mind, in clarity of expression, in understanding the values around, in being foresighted, in being brave and at the same time cautious, and providing against avoidable risks. Knowledge must be a means to the acquisition of these ingredients of wisdom.

The Outcome of Education: Tiruvalluvar's a main philosophy of education is as we have already stated, self-realiz-tion through moral and intellectual development. Wisdom is an omnibus concept connocting the means to such fulfilment as is implied in the philosophy. Therefore the ten couplets on wisdom highlighting some fundamental ingred-ents of wisdom have got to be understood in their widest connotation.

Wisdom is also an important factor that is brought to bear upon every aspect of daily life. The extent to which

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8. In the *thuravaraviyal* of *arrathuppal*, the following are the concepts brough up:
(i) Benevolence; (ii) Abstinence from meat-eating; (iii) Penance (iv) Inconsistent conduct; (v) Absence of fraud; (vi) eracity- (vii) Avoiding anger; (viii) Not doing evil; (ix) Not killing; (x) Instability; (xi) Renunciation; (xii) Realising truth; (xiii) Expiration of disire. Some of these concepts like penance, renunciation may appear other-worldly; but their treatment is entirely with reference to life on earth.
9. See sections on *kalvi* (40) *kalvi* (42) *kallamai* (41) and *arivutaimai* (43) in *Porutpal*
10. Chapter 43.

wisdom is pressed into service depends upon intelligence which varies from person to person. A person of high intelligence is also a person of notable wisdom. The objective of education is, no doubt, to sharpen the intellect so that it is able to function effectively in all situations involving problem-solving, be it a problem of mundane life or one of spiritual life. If we equate wisdom with the concept *jnanam* the goal is the realization of the Absolute. Therefore wisdom has both practical and esoteric application.

With wisdom as objective, certain outcomes have to follow. These outcomes, broadly stated, constitute the major theme and purpose of the *Kural*. Tiruvalluvar's meaning of education is perhaps the most comprehensive. In my opinion *kalvi*, which we ordinarily equate, with education, can have no conceptual translation in other languages; and any attempt at translation cannot succeed in fully revealing the comprehensive nature of this unique concept. It is usually translated as learning or acquisition of knowledge, study, etc., but it is not only much more than these, but even different in certain respects. When we equate education and kalvi, we do not pretend to have established cent perecent identity between the two concepts; but only accepted the English concept as coming nearest to *kalvi* in spite of its conceptual inadequacy when placed with the Tamil concept. A thorough study of*Kural* alone can reveal how comprehensive the meaning of *kalvi* is. It is the basis of the *purushaarthas* (the goals), and without it, the individual is souless[11].

Among the results are those that relate to personal traits on which the foundations of character are laid. An educated person has mastery over what he has learnt. He has a clear glimpse into the universe of what he has studied. 'Kacatu ara' means, without imperfection, or positively, most thoroughly. 'Karpavai' connotes many things. First it emphasizes the infinite character of knowlodge. Secondly, it cautions

11, All the *Purushartuas* constitute *kalvi* in its connotation.

against biting more than could be chewed. Thirdly, it emphasizes the most important principle of functionalism i.e., learning what is of relevance to the current value-system. If an individval has had thorough educatian in this sense, he becomes qualified to be called an educated person. It might sound tautological to say that a person of thorough education deserves to be called an educated person. But what is emphasized is not the possession of knowledge or even wisdom but their reflection in the individual's conduct. The conduct of an educated person is different from that of an uneducated person.

Education makes for perceptual competence of the highest arder. Here, by perception, is meant not only what psychologists call outer perception involving sense apparatus, but also inner perception. This is what we get from the words of the poet; 'the learned are said to have eyes.'[12] Education has the quality of shedding light where there is darkness, and the impact of the person of education on others makes for a refreshing environmental metamorphosis. One would say with the poet that as one lamp lights another, nor grows less, education is the means of lighting up a dark environment (environment understood in its widest connotation of man's nature and values). This outcome of education, as sobering influence, on the less educated, is indeed notable[13]. We have a less exalted version of this idea in the downward fiitration theory devel oped by the British rulers in the 18th and 19th centuries in India[14]. Tiruvalluvar's downward filtration theory is fundamentally different. It leads one to the assumption that a man of education does not merely preach sermons on the mount to the unfortunate ignoramuses or the unlettered, but inspires awe and reverence by his personal life and conduct and constitutes a moral power within the community[15].

12. Kural—393
13. ibid—394
14. This downward filltration theory excluded the large masses of the people from the benefit of the organised education.
15. The downward filtration theory has been given the goby because of the realization that education is indispensable to the democratic way of life.

An interesting aspect of the question of outcomes arisese when we consider verse 398 which suggests that one of the most desirable outcomes is that it makes education relatively prefect, the means to higher levels, and establishes a ceaseless continuance.[16] The phrase '**elumaiyum emaapputaithu**' may be taken to mean excellence leading to greater excellence not only in this birth but in the next seven births. In this couplet the principle of education leading to further education even in a situation of perfection(relatively understood)is important.

Concepts of methodology : Tiruvalluvar set much store by the personal influence of the teacher. He would value learning imparted by a teacher becauce, the knowledge which forms the basis of instruction carries with it the in fluence of the personality of the teacher. The teacher, in a sense, presents himself through the knowledge he imparts. That knowledge is a revelation of his own perfection.

The personality and the influence of the teaeher coustitute instruction by themselves. But his teaching and imparting of knowledge is also important, and has to be absorbed through ear-gate. *Karral* (study) and '*kettal*, (listening) are sometimes presented as two different concepts as in the saying '*KarraliIum kettal nanru*' (listening is better than study). '*Karral*' in this context means the acquisition of knowledge in all ways, and through all senses. '**Kettal**' would mean listening and internalizing. There is a very interesting extension of the concept of **kettal**. Ordinarily, **kettal** is listening (in preference to hearing). What is listened to alone is internalized; and what is 'heard' is often material of judicious for getting after the temporary purpose which, what is heard, is supposed to fufil, has been served. But what is **listened to is the raw material of wisdom** and is internalized immediately it enters the ear-gate. If that were the implication of what Tiruvalluvar means by **kettal** we are led to the doctrine of interest because, what interests an individual is alone internalized. **Kelvi** is not only listening but questioning or asking. In the process of teaching it is not mere uninterrupted listening by the educand; but it is

16. kalvi—398.

a two-way transaction, and the educand listens not only to what the teacher presents, but also what he needs as answers or clarifications, or elaborations arising out of the teacher's presentation. If Tennyson would say 'things seen are mightier than things heard,' Tiruvalluvar would say, 'things learnt through the ear-gate are of eternal value.' The chapter on **Kelvi** is a unique presentation on methodology and had the greatest validity in the New Education.

The importance of ear-gate is increasing in modern educational methodology though visual education is also considered effective. Tiruvalluvar does not present the ear-gate in contrast to the eye-gate; but what is seen would not always make sense without oral interpretation or exposition.[17]

Another significant contribution to methodology is the cultivation of the reflective power. This section **'thuravaraviyal** (ascetic virtue), though usually understood as an exposition on aceticism, which, in a sense it is, presents concepts of singnificance to non-ascetics as well. Contemplation is implied in the concept **'thavam'** (penance) and of **'thurvan'** (Renunciation)[18]

The importance of objectivity is equally stressed in the chapter **natuvu nilaimai** (impartiality)[19]. Objectivity is defiined as detached attitude in the evaluation of the worth of even enemies and strangers.

Elements of Pragmaticism : We are not concerned with such niceties going with pragmatism as existentialism or instrumentalism[20]. We shall accept the ordinary difinition of the concept in our identification of the grains of pragmatism in the **Kural.** The philosophy owes its existence to the change and flux of the world, and the experimental nature of life,

17. There is a greater realization of the importance of oral exposition in modern education.
18. Chapters 27 and 35.
19. Chapter 12.
20. Existentialism and instrumentalism are of very recent origin. Dewey takes credit for these new concepts by way of an improvement on or the development of the pragmatism of William James.

stemming from what we term civilized modern life. Fixed eternal values lose their meaning in situation of constant change, whether it connoted progress or the opposite of it—depending on how changing values are looked at. Absolutism loses its meaning and relativism becomes the governing principle. If philosophy dictates to life in idealism, life dictates to philosophy in pragmatism. To the pragmatist man creates his own values in the process of actual living. Reality is not final or absolute but is in the process of making and will continue to be made eternity. Truth is not finally established but is tested by the criteria of workability and utility. No judgement can be considered true before it works satisfactorily. The pragmatists believe in change, provide for change and look at every situation of life as a problem to be solved. All human efforts are of crucial importance. Life is a forced adaptation to an infinite environment. A rational approch to problems of life is substituted for unquestioning faith[21]

Tested in the light of the obove criteria, Tiruvalluvar does not appear to be anything other than an idealist. But his idealism while like ideal idealism dictates to life, shows up aspects that lead to the impression that he was not theoretial speculative or merely academic. His philosophy provides for change and development. It also provides for a rational approach to problems. He is himself an example of an individual adapting himself to the realities of the Tamil society, the pristine purity of whose culture had long been diluted, and the value-system had suffered drastic changes. Tiruvalluvar, like Sankara, was not an archaicistic revivalist, but an enlightened conservative or (conservator) who revived the ancient Tamil spirit in the manner of a realist, providing for all the changes that had come over society, and casting his ideas in a recognizable, valid, contemporary mould. His saying, in regard to the true nature of reality, could as well as be consi-

21. The rational approach is emphasized in the chapters payanilal collaamai (20), oppuravarithal (22 , thuravu (35), avaavaruthal (37), arivutaimai (43), kaalamarithal (49), itamarithal (50), therinthu thelital (51) and therinthu vinaiyaatal (52).

derd the thought of William James or John Dewey, except that our Tamil philosopher lived many centuries before these two founders of modern pragmatism. Many of his chapters contain grains of the pragmatic philosophy[22]. In a world drifting for materialism, leaving behind cherished traditional values, we might imagine Tiruvalluvar the idealist par excellence. But when Tiruvalluvar lived and wrote his **Kural**, he had certainly deviated from the exotic norms that emphasized rigidity, blind faith, and conformity and social stratification and must have appeared a radical to those swore by the exotic norms[23].

Tiruvalluvar—the eclectic : The *porutpaal* (Book II) of *Kural* may show up shining particles of what we call materialism, but Tiruvalluvar was far from being a materiatist in the sense that gave over-weightage to matter rather than spirit.

Any suggestion of materialism in the *Kural* can only be the result of a superficial study of the work. Lest he be equated with ultra-realists like Kautilya or a Machiaveli, he was far-sighted enough to begin his work with concepts suggestive of worldly detachment, and work up towards a philosophy in which life in this world has to be lived correctly before any thought of detachment or renunciation could be entertained.

As we evaluate Tiruvalluvar today as a philosopher the only label we can permit ourselves to give him is that he is an eclectic. It is this eclectism that has invested his work with eternal validity.

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22. Ibid.
23. But these exotic norms do not seem to have wide popularity though these were slowly gathering momentum right from Cankam ageto become norms par excellence in the Pallava age.

Appendices

APPENDIX - I

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APPENDIX—II

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41. Ariviyalum Aanmeekamum

Sciences:

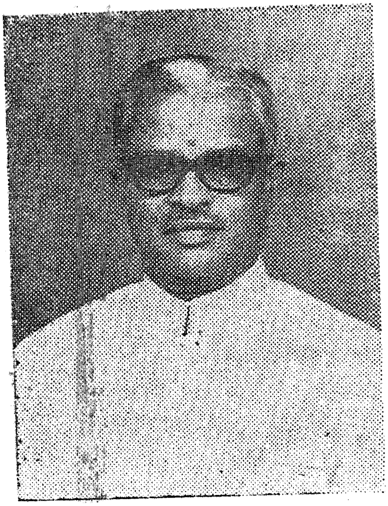
42. Maanida Udal
43. Anuvin Aakkam
44. Ilaignar Vaanoli
45. Ilaignar Tolaikkaatchi
46. Athisaya Minnanu
47. Namathn Udal
48. Irakettukal
49. Ambulip-payanam
50. Tolai Ulakach—Chelavu
51. Anukkaru Bowtheekam
52. Illara Neri
53. Vaazhaiyadi Vaazhai
54. Ariviyal Virunthu
55. Vaana Mandalak—Kaatchi

Auto—Biography, Biography:

56. Ninaivuk—Kumizhikal—I
57. Nuiavnk—kumizhikal—II
58. Thaayumaanavar
59. Izaamalingar

Research:

60. Kalingattup—parani Aaraaichi
61. Religion and Philosophy of Nalaryira Divyap Pirabandham with Special reference to Nammalvar
62. Studies in Arts and Sciences
63. Collected Papers.



Dr. N. Subbu Reddiar born on 7 September 1917 started his professional life as the Founder-headmaster of a High School in Tiruchirappalli District with recognition as a keen student of science and a scholar in Tamil and became Head of the Department of Tamil in Alagappa Training College Karaikudi where he had plenty of opporunities for doing research both in Education and Tamil Literature and justly earned the reputation of a prolific writer of profound scholarship. He built up the Department of Tamil in a manner, it is no exaggeration, not only salvaging Tamil from the traditional rut into which it had fallen making it impossible to grow into the vibrant language with its inimitable literature. If Tamil commands both recognition and respect throughout the world today it is due to the kind of direction that modern scholars of Tamil such as Dr. Reddiar had provided to a great language of the world with a literature replete with the loftiest of thoughts conceivable by human genius Dr Reddiar's services were naturally requisitioned by Sri Venkateswara University where he developed and headed a Department of Tamil securing for it equal status to other Departments. Dr. Reddiar is well-known for his brilliant works both in Tamil and English on Tamil Literature, Religion, Philosophy, Science, Psychology and Literary Criticism. The total number of works so far published comes to 63; he is continuing his research work and publications. He has won a number of awards from the University and Government for his masterly treatment of some of the new fields of knowledge.

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